

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

# High Ideals





# FINAL ISSUE OF *HIGH IDEALS*

*HIGH IDEALS* is being replaced by the annual *YOUTH PROGRAMS*—1960-61. This publication is quite similar to *HIGH IDEALS*, but on an annual scale. It contains topics on subjects such as are found in *HIGH IDEALS*—devotions, the five-points of the LLA program, etc. The topics are written by pastors, their wives, leaders in church congregations.

The main portion of the book is composed of 45 topical programs, grouped into 11 general areas of subject matter. The remaining 10 or 15 are feature program materials—some are worship services, dramas, song services, programs for the church seasons. Also there are plenty of suggestions at the beginning of the book for using these materials.

Practically all the programs are suitable for use in high school leagues, (grades 9 or 10 through 12). Some of the programs are labeled as especially suitable also for Junior leagues (grades 7 through 9), or young adults (post high).

As a replacement of *HIGH IDEALS*, the new publication will be LLA's chief source of program material for congregational leagues. *YOUTH PROGRAMS* will be available from our office June 1st, 1960, at a cost of \$1.50 per copy. Orders for three (3) or more copies to one address, \$1.25 per copy.

Order Now from LLA  
2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia 29, Penna.

*LUTHER LIFE* will continue as your  
magazine for Lutheran Youth

# High Ideals

APRIL, MAY, JUNE, 1960

How Do We Pray? .....	2	william r. seaman
What is Worship? .....	7	john buerk
(Seven Services for Lent or Holy Week)		
Jobs for You in the Church .....	14	vernon l. strempke
How Do We Witness? .....	18	fred reisz
The Green People .....	22	carl t. uehling
(A Play)		
Parents and Patience .....	29	helen j. shafer
Christians Care! .....	33	
(Youth and the Aged)		
Don't Stunt Your Growth! .....	36	larry nelson
What Happens at Communion? .....	42	donald knudson
Commercialism in Luther League .....	47	bob beckstrom
What Is the Church? .....	54	elizabeth hess
Project LWR! .....	58	
The Christian in Politics .....	59	eberhard amelung
High Ideals Index 1960 .....	63	

## VOLUME 29, NUMBER 2

SUE SANTMIRE  
Editorial

RUTH SHAFFER  
Subscriptions

HIGH IDEALS is published quarterly by the Luther League of America, a national youth organization of the United Lutheran Church in America. Publication office: Kutztown Publishing Company, 241 West Main Street, Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Editorial office: 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, Penna. Prices: Single copies, 35 cents; single subscription, \$1.00 per year; in clubs of 10 or more 90 cents per year. Entered as second class matter at Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Change of address should be mailed to: HIGH IDEALS, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, Penna.



## HOW DO WE PRAY?

by William R. Seaman

The rules of prayer are simple. Let us look at some of them.

*First, think of God as your closest friend.* He is ready to hear your prayers. Like a true friend he will always answer you when you talk to him. He may not always give you the answer you want. But whatever the answer, you may be sure that, like a real friend, he wishes you well, and gives what is best for you.

What is the first thing you must do before you make friends with any one? You must *talk* to them. Getting into conversation is the first step toward friendship, whether you want to make friends with another boy or girl—or with God. When it is God we are talking to, we call it praying. I expect you talk to your school friends every day, and God would like you to talk to him just as often.

But how can God listen to each one of the thousands of people who may be speaking to him at the same time? It's something like this: An orchestra and chorus were rehearsing for a concert. There were many kinds of instruments and many voices. Everything seemed to be going well when suddenly the conductor stopped them all. He turned to one of the violinists and said, "Mr. So-and-So, your E string is flat." Mr. So-and-So was surprised and annoyed, but when he touched the E string he found it was flat. He had to tune up. As a human conductor can pick out one sound from all those voices and instruments, God can hear each of us when we speak to him, no matter how many others may be speaking at the same time! Even more than this: God is never-failing in his attention!

He hears the smallest and most insignificant words which come from our lips!

God *is* our closest friend, and we need never hesitate to speak to him. We can tell him things about ourselves: our hopes and plans, our sins and failures, our needs and desires without hesitation, and know that he is hearing every word. We can tell him our deepest secrets and know that he will keep them within his heart.

Has there been some trouble in your home? Are you worried about



some companion? Do you need some help in making an important decision? Go to your closest friend, God; talk it over with him; ask him for his help and guidance. You will never be disappointed.

It is not always easy to know what to say to God. We can all get off to a good start, if we begin by *praising* him. He has made us. He gives us daily gifts. He has given us a marvelous world in which to live. Day by day he provides for us the necessities of life. He has given us our home, church, school, friends and neighbors. He has placed into our hands the Holy Bible. He has given us his costliest gift in Jesus Christ.

Are you well? Thank God for health. Are you getting along in school? Thank God for truth, and for the opportunity of knowing it. Have you heard the songs of the birds, or seen some lovely sunsets? Thank God for beauty. Have you traveled with some fine companion? Thank God for the goodness you see in other people.

Prayer always becomes easy and natural when you begin to think of God as your closest friend.

### A question for discussion

What's your idea about God: is he far away \_\_\_\_\_, near you \_\_\_\_\_, up in heaven \_\_\_\_\_, with you all the day long \_\_\_\_\_, not much interested in you \_\_\_\_\_, your closest friend \_\_\_\_\_?

### Buzz session project

Make a list of things we ought to talk about in our prayers.

## II

*Second, think of God as being with you at all times.* This is one of the promises Jesus made, and he always keeps his promises. "Lo, I am with you alway."

Almost three hundred years ago there was a lay monk whom the world has called Brother Lawrence. Wherever he went, in whatever he did, he felt the presence of God. For fifteen years he worked in the kitchen of a monastery knowing that God was as much with him in the kitchen as in the chapel. "The time of business," said he, "does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clutter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquillity as if I were upon my knees."

How do I say my prayers? I walk along the street and see a cripple, and I say to God, "Lord, have mercy upon this man". I hear a man curse, and say, "Father, forgive him, and teach him reverence." I see a group of little children playing, and say, "Jesus, lay thy hand upon them; bless them, and preserve them from all evil." I come upon a bit of difficult work, and say, "Lord, help me." I have to make a decision, and pray, "Jesus, direct my will."

Do you have dishes to do? Remember Brother Lawrence, and do them knowing that you are in the presence of God. Are you facing sickness or an operation? Remember Jesus, the Good Physician, is with you. Ask him to watch over you, and to heal you. Are you going on a trip? Ask him to grant you a happy journey and a safe return. A good

prayer for travelers is, "The Lord preserve my going out and my coming in." *Every bit of life*—friendship, home, work, play, school, the service we do for others—is lived in the presence of God, wherever we are!

This raises the question, "But don't we need a special place for prayer?" What we have been saying is that we can pray anywhere, for we are always in the presence of God. All this is true, but it is also true that most of us need some quiet place where we can be alone with God. Jesus said, "When you pray, go into your own room, shut your door, and pray to your Father privately." Most of us need such a place, where we can be alone with God—away from the radio and television, away from the traffic and the crowd, away from our friends and the members of our family. Here in the quiet place, as on a street or in a store, we are in the presence of God. Here we speak with God—we with him—he with us—as friend to friend.

### For discussion

1. Do you feel the presence of God in church as you ought? If not, why not? What changes in the services would help to bring God closer to us?

2. Would you say that Brother Lawrence's experience is possible for us?

### III

*Third, be honest with God.* Luther said that the first rule of prayer is "Don't lie to God." Never pretend. Never think of yourself as being more than you are, or more than others. This was the sin of the Pharisees. They pretended to be perfect. They paraded themselves before God as holy men. Jesus called them hypocrites, actors, fools.

One day two men went up to the temple to pray. The one, a tax-collector, beat his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." The other, a Pharisee, stood with pride and boasted to God about his good deeds. The publican was honest with God, the Pharisee dishonest.

The *best* that anyone of us can say about ourselves is that we are *sinners*. If we say this and mean it from the heart, God will be true to his promise and forgive us. Sincere confession is painful, because it hurts our pride, but this is the only confession that will be acceptable to God. Tell God your blunders, and that you are ashamed of them. Tell him about those harsh words to friends or to strangers, and ask him to forgive you. Whatever your sin, make an honest confession. Be honest with God—always. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Be honest, also, with God by making the prayer of the lips the prayers of the heart. Did you ever pray for something that you really didn't want? Some people pray for the conversion of the heathen, but inwardly hope that they will always remain pagan. Others pray for brotherhood and have their hearts filled with prejudice and hate. Others pray for peace and desire war for the sake of bigger business and more profits. Others pray for purity and have their minds full of wicked thoughts.

Many years ago there lived a man by the name of Augustine who in his younger days used to pray, "O God, make me pure, make me pure—but not yet." He did not want his prayer to be answered. What about *your* praying? Are you asking for the things you really desire? Or



are you only saying words? Where do your prayers originate: from the heart, or from the lips?

Be honest, also, with God when it comes to praise and thanksgiving. Give God the honor and credit that is due him. Praise him for today with all its blessings. Thank him for work and recreation. Thank him for Jesus Christ, for the Holy Spirit, for the Sacraments, and for the Church. Make some new discoveries about God's love daily and praise his holy Name!

How do I say my prayers? Let's say them *honestly*. Let's be honest with God—always!

### Self-examination

1. Have I always been honest with God in my prayers?
2. Do I praise God for his gifts, or simply take them for granted?

### Buzz session

At the beginning of The Service there is The Confession. Do you think people really are sorry for their sins, or is The Confession a mere babble of words? How can we make The Confession more real to ourselves, or to others?

## IV

*Fourth, pray in Christ's name.* Jesus said, "Whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." He never said, "Ask anything you like and you will get it." What he did say was, "Ask in my name." What does this mean? It means that we are asking for things that he would wish, the sort of things that are in line with his will, the sort of things that will make me and my bit of the world what he wants them to be. In other words we pray for the sort of things that will please God.

See what this means. It means that I cannot ask God, in the name of Christ, to help me get the better of some one else. I can't ask him to give *me* all the comforts and pleasures, if it means less and less for my neighbor. If we think of prayer simply as a kind of magic way of getting things done for ourselves we have a wrong idea about prayer. Prayer is *not* a means of getting the things we want for ourselves. Prayer is a way of letting God *use* us to do the things *he* wants—for us, or for others, or for our world. It is always, "*Thy* will be done," NOT, "My will be done."

When we pray in the name of Jesus it means that we want *his* will to be done. It means, too, that we want only those things, for ourselves and for others, that will please God and bring honor to his name.

### A project

Study the **Service Book and Hymnal**, or the **Parish School Hymnal**, or the **Christian Youth Hymnal**, and discover how the prayers usually are offered up in the name of Jesus.

### Buzz session

In John 16:23 Jesus says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." What would you say is included in the word, "Whatsoever"?

*Fifth, keep on praying.* Remember, you have a Father in heaven who hears every prayer that you offer. He knows your desires. He knows your feelings. He understands your difficulties in prayer. He knows how busy you are, how easy it is to forget him. But in spite of all these things, your Father in heaven wants you to show him your love, to come to him daily, and to remember that he is your dearest friend.

Jesus told the story of a man who received an unexpected guest near midnight. He was embarrassed because he had no lunch to set before his friend. He went to his neighbor's house to borrow three loaves of bread, but his neighbor refused to open the door. The man on the outside kept on pounding until his friend finally opened the door and gave him what he needed. Some people think that Jesus wants us to believe that prayer is like that—like pounding on the door of a sleeping friend. But that is not the point of the story. The point of the parable is that God is not like that—not like a sleeping friend, but like a loving Father who hears every whisper, every word, every desire. "Ask, and ye shall receive." And here is his promise, "Every one that asketh receiveth."

Keep on praying. *Learn to pray by praying.* Don't worry if your sentences are not right, or if your grammar is poor, or if you feel that you have stumbled through the prayer. God understands. Keep on praying. Pray in the morning; pray in the evening. Pray in your home. Pray in church. Pray when you walk along the street, ride the buses, or take a walk through the woods. Wherever you are, think of God, and keep on praying. Let your days and nights be filled with prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

---

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Luke 11:1-4

Luke 17:11-19

Luke 18:10-14

Luke 18:35-43

John 6:1-13

HYMNS: SBH 456: One there is above all others; SBH 450: We Praise Thee, O God, Our Redeemer Creator; SBH 538: Lord Speak to Me, that I May Speak.

NEW BOOKLET!

NEW BOOKLET!

### GOALS AND GUIDES FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE IN THE CONGREGATION

The Why and How of Christian Service for Your Group! Suggestions,  
Aids, Resources for Programs.

Board of Social Missions

231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

25c

25c



# WHAT IS WORSHIP?

by John Buerk

*... services of worship for Lent or Holy Week*

IT is disturbing to hear people define "worship" as, "talking with God," or as, "God's minute," or as, "that time we spend with God." The Christian is constantly in the presence of God, and he is confronted by God at every turn, in every act, and through every thought! All our conversation is essentially with God.

What, then, is "worship?" It varies. But, primarily, *worship is a focusing of our attention upon our relationship to God.* Throughout history, worship has taken many forms. The best forms have survived, and we use some of these in our liturgical worship. The big problem is that our forms become commonplace, and the purpose of worship, which is to call us up short in our routine and focus our attention on our relationship to God, never takes place! Worship must be provocative at some points.

The following worship services attempt to incorporate the traditional form of The Evening Suffrages with a provocative look at our relationship to God. Silence is used often, because it does us good once in a while to be still and to know that God is God!

In using The Evening Suffrages, which you will find on page 155 in the new Service Book and Hymnal, note that the Service is to begin with the invocation: "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." At the beginning of each worship service you will find a suggested hymn and Psalm. You may begin with the hymn, and use the Psalm at the appropriate place. Since the second part of the worship services usually have a scripture lesson incorporated in them, you may omit the Lesson which is called for following the Psalm. Also, since prayer is part of the second section of the worship services, you may go directly into the "Collect for Peace" instead of using the "Collect for the Day" as called for. The "Collect for Peace" is the last prayer on page 155, and begins with the words, "We give thanks unto thee, heavenly Father . . ." The second part of the worship services will conclude with a special benediction, so you may omit the Benedicamus and the Benediction on page 156.

A worship center is important, because it focuses our attention and helps us to concentrate on our devotions. Have as a worship center a Crucifix with a candle on either side of it, and slightly to the front. Try to arrange the room so that everyone may see the worship center. At the conclusion of the

"Collect for Peace," put out the lights, and have the worship leaders read their material from the rear of the room, using a flashlight or a lectern lamp. The room should remain in darkness for one minute following the final "Amen."

## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (1):**

**The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 149, "THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION"**

**Psalm 62**

**First Reader:** Isaiah 53:1-3

**Second Reader:** Matthew 25:31-46

**First Reader:** Let us pray for God to guide us that we may recognize the Christ who is despised by men. May we be sensitive to his sorrows as they are reflected in the sorrows of our fellow men.

**Complete silence for three minutes.**

**Second Reader:** Almighty God, who hath become as one of us, may we recognize thee in our midst. As we move from day to day, from friend to friend, from joy to sorrow, from giving to receiving, may we remember the giving of thine only begotten Son. It is in his name that we pray. Amen.

**First Reader:** (Benediction) May the God of grace be with us, and may he create in us a sense of his presence, and a desire to help the suffering who surround us. Amen.

**Silence for one minute.**

## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (2):**

**The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 153, "JESUS WITH THY CHURCH ABIDE"**

**Psalm 61**

**First Reader:** Isaiah 53:4-7

**Second Reader:** John 8:34-36

**First Reader:** The only kind of love which is worthwhile is the kind which is willing to suffer for the sake of another. In Christ is love perfected. In the love of Christ we are redeemed and made whole. In Christ we are made free indeed. Let us pray for the realization of God's love. May we realize the meaning of love as it becomes meaningful through suffering. May we find that the love of God means enough to us that we may be willing to suffer for it.

**Silence for three minutes.**

**Second Reader:** Almighty God, who hath become as one of us, may we come to realize the kind of love that is willing to suffer for another. As we talk, and as we think, and as we work, and as we study, may thy love be conscious in us, and may we be constrained to love, as thou hast loved us. Amen.

**First Reader:** (Benediction) May the God of grace, who would draw all men unto himself, draw us and others through us into his forgiving presence. Amen.

**Silence for one minute.**



## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (3):**

**The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 155, "LORD, KEEP US STEADFAST IN THY WORD"**

**Psalm 139**

**First Reader:** John 1:1-13

**Second Reader:** 1 Peter 2:9-10

**First Reader:** In silence, let us think about God as the light of men.

**Silence for two minutes.**

**Second Reader:** Almighty God, in whom there is no darkness, enlighten us by thy presence. Grant us such a knowledge of thee that we may find direction for our way in life. Amen.

**First Reader:** In silence, let us think about the testimony Christ gave as to the nature of God by the way he loved those whom he came to know, and by the way he died for those whom he loved.

**Silence for two minutes.**

**Second Reader:** Almighty God, who art the light of the world, enlighten us by thy presence. May we find in Christ a new knowledge of thee, and of thy concern for mankind. As we are led by thee, so may we lead others into thy paths of truth and light. Amen.

**First Reader:** In silence, let us think about our new relationship to God, such that we have been given power to become the sons of God. Let us consider the responsibility that we have in this new found relationship.

**Silence for two minutes.**

**Second Reader:** Almighty God, who art the light of the world, grant us the ability to grasp what it means to be a child of thine. May we be granted the courage to remain in this fellowship with thee, and the inspiration to draw others into this fellowship. Amen.

**First Reader:** (Benediction) May the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, direct our way according to his will. Amen.

**Silence for one minute.**

## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (4):**

**The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 11, "OH HOW SHALL I RECEIVE THEE"**

**Psalm 130**

**First Reader:** Romans 8:9-17

**Second Reader:** When an animal suffers, it will cry; and if its pain is too great, it dies. With men, the situation is somewhat different. When men suffer, they do more than just cry; they question! It is in suffering that men are able to discern themselves the best, because it is then that they are most truly men. St. Paul speaks of the need to suffer in order for men to know who they really are—the children of God, and fellow heirs with Christ. As we suffer, we question; as we question, we come to understand ourselves better; as we come to know ourselves, we realize our spiritual nature, and we come to know God. In silence, let us consider ourselves as children of God, and as responsible members of his holy family.

**Silence for three minutes.**

**First Reader:** Romans 8:18-25.

**Second Reader:** If what St. Paul says is true, then the mystery which surrounds Christ is the source of our hope. The man on the cross has always been a mystery, and he always will be. "We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." We are to know God, but we must wait patiently. Christ did not assure us that in him we would escape the tribulation of the world, but he did assure us that in the midst of our tribulation, we would experience that peace which passes all understanding. "If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." In silence, let us consider the hope that we have in Christ.

**Silence for three minutes.**

**First Reader:** (Benediction) May the God of hope fill our hearts with such a knowledge of him that we may wait and work patiently until the day of salvation; and may the peace of God that passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

**Silence for one minute.**

## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (5):**

**The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 484, "GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY"**

(May be sung to the tune, St. Anne, page 168)

**Psalm 63**

**First Reader:** Albert Schweitzer has said: "(Jesus) comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, he came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which he has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in this fellowship, and as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is."<sup>1</sup> In silence, let us consider who Christ is.

**Silence for three minutes.**

**Second Reader:** Almighty God, who hath called all men, may we who hear and would follow thee be granted the courage to follow where our faith may lead. Forgive us, Lord, when we run from thy presence, for we run in ignorance and in fear. Strengthen us that we may stand, and standing in thy presence come to know the true joy of thy presence. Amen.

**First Reader:** (Benediction) May the God who is the creator and sustainer of all things, create in us a new heart, and renew a right spirit within us. Amen.

**Silence for one minute.**

## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (6):**

**The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 467, "DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND"**

**Psalm 93**



**Reader: Matthew 25:36-44**

There is no element in our faith that is quite so mysterious as prayer. For the person who truly prays, prayer is not easy. It involves that terrible struggle which always comes from being honest with ourselves. Prayer demands honesty—it strips us of personality, and all worldly accomplishments—and it leaves us naked before God.

In silence, let us pray to God who hears and answers prayer.

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** Prayer is a search. It is a search into the corners of our lives where trouble and weariness hide themselves almost defying our efforts to sweep them from our soul. The search is difficult, because we are forced to explore areas of ourselves which are not always the most beautiful. We are forced to look at the small hurts we have caused others. We are tempted to blame all wrong on ourselves which is equally as bad as our failing to assume responsibility or our own wrongs.

In silence, let us pray to God who hears and answers prayer.

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** The only real basis upon which a person can pray is a belief in God. This belief requires a sense of his presence in our midst. It means knowing God so well, that you can talk to him, and maybe even have an argument with him. Some of the Old Testament authors knew God in this way. Remember how Abraham laughed when God told him that Sarah would conceive and bear a child even though she was “of a great age”? Remember Abraham haggling with God over how many righteous men had to be in Sodom before it could be saved? There must be a quiet confidence in the presence and activity of God. There must be a certain trust in him that gives us assurance. This is not the feeling that our prayers will be answered as we think they should, but it is the realization that God does listen, and that he is with us in our struggle.

In silence, let us pray to God who hears and answers prayer.

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** Sometimes we come to prayer as a last resort. We turn to God in prayer only when we are at our wit's end. But Frank Cairns, the great Scotch preacher, reminds us that “. . . to be at one's wit's end is not to be in the worst place in the world, for it is here that one is most likely to cry unto the Lord; and that is the healthiest exercise the soul ever gets.”<sup>2</sup> Our Lord, on the night in which he was betrayed, prayed with great anguish of heart. The gospel tells us that he sweat drops as of blood, as he labored with the purpose God had for him. Prayer is that place where we step into the unknown, and the unknown seems familiar to us. It is frightening, because we move more directly into the presence of God—and this is always frightening. We would keep to ourselves, but circumstances do not permit us to do this. We are at our wit's end, and God speaks. His answer may be harsh, but his mercy is great. We are troubled, and we are comforted at the same time.

In silence, let us pray to God who hears and answers prayer.

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** The form of prayer varies greatly with each of us, and it varies depending on the circumstances in which we pray. St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans said, "We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words." A marvelous thought, and a penetrating thought. Our quiet times may be the times of our most profound meditation. In stillness, we often speak the loudest. Whether or not our prayers reach God does not depend upon their being spoken loudly enough to reach heaven, but upon their being spoken softly enough to reach deep into our souls.

**Matthew 6:5-13** (Benediction) May God, who hears and answers prayer, hear us and speak that we may hear, and be comforted, and seek his will. Amen.

**Silence for one minute.**

## **A WORSHIP SERVICE FOR LENT (7):**

### **The Evening Suffrages, page 155**

**Hymn 88, "O SACRED HEAD NOW WOUNDED"**

### **Psalm 56**

**Reader:** "God sets his own stage in his own way and his ways are not after our expectations. Out of the weak things of this world he brings forth the mighty, out of the despised things, the magnificent, out of hidden things, the clear, and out of darkness, light. Out of the shadows of a peasant stable he draws forth the light of the world. Gathering up a few words of agonized prayer cried in the night, he turns the course of history. By all current calculations, this still makes nonsense."

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** "'And when the sixth hour was come, there was a darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.' From his cross he looked into the heavens and cried aloud; the heavens took pity and came down and clothed his nakedness in their own dark and awful majesty. God so loved the world that he hid his son's last hours in darkness. Knowing men hate light, he knew men could never find his son except in darkness."

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** "From that day on, men have not been able to think the same, for the face of the earth then took on a new complexion; old land marks faded out of sight and men stood still to get their bearings. A stable became the capital of the world and a vile cross the emblem of nobility."

**Silence for one minute.**

**Reader:** "Because the world loves the darkness of the ninth hour, Christ remains on his cross. But he is not dead, his spirit burns, a living flame wherever two or three are gathered together."<sup>3</sup> Let us pray. Almighty God, who doeth suffer continually for the sins of men, may we who fear the light, and prefer the darkness, be led by



to school for years to learn about faith, and we haven't had near the training he's had.

But think a minute. Does your faith really depend on anything *you* do? Does it really depend on how much *you* learn and know? We know that we always keep growing in our faith, just as we keep growing in our bodies and in our understanding of the world around us. There's no magic 'stage' or 'age' at which we suddenly know all and can sit back and just talk about our great knowledge. We *all* are maturing in our faith. Adults and young people alike. Some people do a better job of this than others. And some people never get far at all!

If we are Christians, then we confess that Christ has made some impact on us. We confess that God has come to us in Christ and has saved all men. But this wonderful gift of love in Christ is not something we can keep to ourselves! Christ has commanded us, commissioned us to preach the message of God's love in Christ to all men near and far (Matt. 28:18-20). This 'preaching' doesn't mean we all have to learn to write sermons. *Every* Christian's job is to witness to Christ—this is our Christian Vocation, our calling from God. This witnessing is what we know as 'Evangelism.'

### *What is Witnessing?*

But what *is* witnessing? Witnessing is letting someone know about some event or fact we've seen or learned or experienced. We can witness about many things, even formals, baseball. Anything that excites us and makes us want to tell someone else about it: these are things we share with our friends and many times with anyone who'll listen!

This is where your faith comes in. If your faith is the alive and exciting thing that you want your friends to know about, then you will let them know! Your faith is *not* the way you look at one part of your life, the Sunday part, your faith is the way you look at *all* of your life, at home, at school, at work and on the ballfield and dance floor. Your faith

is the way you understand God's purpose for your whole life, and how you might serve him in whatever you do.

Witnessing about your *faith* then, takes in *all your life*. You witness to *everyone* you meet and to everybody with whom you come in contact.

"I don't think you should run around with that crowd. That's the gang the Brook boy is in, and I don't want you hanging around with that kind. How many times have we heard that (or some variation of it) from our parents or friends' parents or maybe even a teacher? Very often a group of some kind, your school crowd, school, community or even country, is judged by the actions of one of its members. This is because each member is a sort of representative of that group to people who are on the outside. When you belong to a group, then, you have a certain amount of responsibility to guide your actions so that you do not damage the others in the group.

Being in the Church is *something* like this. As a Christian you are a member of the fellowship of believers, the Body of Christ, as the New Testament calls it. Many people judge the Church by *you*. Thus *you* are a constant witness, good or bad for the Church.

But there's a difference between the Church and any other group. Our responsibility as Christians lies with the Church to be sure. But this is the group in which we work together for *Christ*. Our main responsibility is to *Christ*! *Christ himself has laid upon us the job of witnessing for him.*

Remember Jesus wrote no books to carry on His words to all the world. He left to his disciples the big task of spreading the news about God's act of love in his Son! This job has passed down to us in 1960! Our job as Christians is to communicate the message about Christ to others! Christ is the *life* of the Church. This life is communicated by the words, actions, and examples of faith given by one person to another, by a Christian to another person. You are God's agent through whom he speaks to others, to

your family and friends, even to people you haven't met!

This is the *responsibility* which is laid upon you. You see your life as a constant witness for many things; but if you are to be a true Christian, you must place Christ at the origin of all that you do and say. You must enrich all your words and actions with this spirit of Christ so that you can exert an effective Christian witness upon the world. This is your response to God's love in Christ!

But don't be snowed! Don't let the word 'witness' and the responsibility God has placed on his people scare you! Instead of letting ourselves be overcome, let's do our job!

### *Your Whole Life*

How can we witness? Your whole life can be a witness for Christ. This doesn't mean that you have to latch on to a staunch, old-fashioned kind of piety that sets you above and apart from everybody else. You can't witness to a blank wall. Christ didn't spend all his time in the temple, and he and his disciples preached and worked with all kinds of people from all levels of society—and *they* valued their message about God's love more than their own reputations!

Christ is for *all* men. He doesn't care what color they are or how much money they make or what kind of car they drive or whether they've joined in the latest fad at school. Your job is to witness for Christ where you are, to *all* the people around you, people you know and people you don't know.

Sometimes you'll find it's best to be a 'silent' witness. Let your life speak for itself. Everything you do and think, your attitudes toward your friends, toward strangers in school and church, the concern you have for the aged, the sick and poor, your willingness to help the lonely, your giving of your time and talents and money for God's work throughout your whole community, all these are ways to witness for Christ.

But there are some times when you cannot be silent. Christians must speak out against injustice, prejudice and hate, all

of which are around us daily. Christians must make the spirit of Christ felt in school and community and country, in relationships between different kinds of people. Christians must ask questions and criticize out of *love* and not out of pride. Don't be afraid to talk about your faith, the impact which Christ has made upon your life! Often this can be a much more effective witness than merely asking young people to come to Luther League meetings.

Be willing to learn about your faith. Many young people get involved in bull sessions about "religion" (they're never quite sure what they mean by "religion"). They go along for a while, but then they're trapped! They really don't know enough about their faith to talk about it intelligently without distorting it somehow. So they try to talk their way out of a jam. They end up saying things they really don't believe, tossing terms around they really don't understand, and "religion" turns out to be "*my* religion" instead of Christ's message to all men! The center of the universe suddenly becomes "*me*" instead of God in Christ, and you end up saying "well, we'll all end up in the same place anyway!"

Keep up with your confirmation studies long after you've been confirmed. Grow in your faith! Know how other people *think* and how they regard the Church and the message about Christ, then you can know how to witness to them. You have to meet people where they are to witness effectively, to help turn them in the right direction toward Christ.

Remember that God hasn't given us this big job of telling the world about Christ and then deserted us. God sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles after Christ died, and so he sends us the Holy Spirit in 1960 to help *us* and work through *us*. God gives you all the strength you'll need. Never be discouraged, because the Lord works in unusual ways and ways which often we cannot understand.

Your Vocation, your calling is to bring Christ before people, to show them what Christ means to *you* in *your* life. Once you let the Holy Spirit help you do this



the Spirit will continue to work in this person, too. Then, when the soil is exactly prepared, it will bring forth fruit. The final act of salvation has been performed by God in Christ. Only when we throw ourselves helplessly before Christ and ask forgiveness can we receive salvation. You cannot do this for

anyone else, but you can be God's agent through whom God works to lead another to Christ.

You witness about many "its" in your life, but *for* whom do you witness? You witness *for* Christ. You witness for the advancement of his kingdom by witnessing about Christ's love for you.

## PRESENTATION POINTERS

The easiest way to get this topic rolling would be to present the first three situations. This can be done by a few leaguers. The topic leader could proceed from there. The topic should be presented along the informal discussion lines. Use the following questions:

What does witnessing mean?

Is your faith a vital, exciting thing?

To whom do we witness?

How do we witness?

For whom do you witness? About what do you witness?

Following are some additional questions which might prove fruitful in discussion:

What does Evangelism mean? (check your LLA **Guide for Evangelism Secretaries**)

Do we witness only with and to people who come to us, or do we go to them?

Are there possibilities for witnessing at school? What are some?

How do we witness? Remember that witnessing depends on the specific situation in which you find yourself and on the person to whom you witness.

In our league evangelism programs, should we visit only lapsed members or ask non-Lutherans to come?

What is our responsibility to non-Christians? Does everyone's "right to choose his own belief" mean that we should not preach Christ to anyone who believes in another god or belongs to a non-Christian group?

## WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

HYMN: SBH: O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:1-8

TOPIC

PRAYER: Remember, O God, what thou hast wrought in us, and not what we deserve; and, as thou hast called us to thy service, make us worthy of our calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, the God of Abraham, look upon thine everlasting covenant, and cause the captivity of Judah and Israel to return. They are thy people; O be thou their Saviour, that all who love Jerusalem and mourn for her may rejoice with her, for Jesus Christ's sake, their Saviour and ours, Amen.

HYMN: SBH 168: O God Our Help in Ages Past.

## NEW AT LLA!

GUIDE FOR SERVICE PROJECTS—15¢

GUIDE FOR MISSIONS SECRETARIES (Revised)—15¢

# THE GREEN PEOPLE

by Carl T. Uehling

## THE SETTING

The only requirements are a table and seven chairs. The characters are presumed to be members of a panel, and the audience is presumed to be something in the nature of a civic group which has gathered in order to hear a report from the panel on the matter of the "Green People". It is not necessary to have a curtain, or any other props.

## THE CAST

**THE MODERATOR:** He is dressed in a business suit and is the "chairman" of the meeting itself.

**THE PASTOR:** The Pastor can be of any age . . . dressed in clerics. He is the spokesman for the town.

**EDITOR:** The Editor ought to correspond to traditional views of newspaper editors . . . nervous, cynical, wry.

**THE CHAIRLADY:** This lady should be pompous and somewhat overbearing. She is the kind who loves organizational work.

**THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.** She is rather willowy . . . not too bright, but very nice.

**FACTORY OWNER:** He can be portly, a picture of success. He could be "smoking" a cigar.

**SOCIAL SCIENTIST:** He should look like a scholar, have a briefcase, perhaps, and a learned, detached air.

*(All the characters are seated in their places. The Moderator rises and addresses the audience.)*

**Moderator:** This story should begin with the words "Once upon a time." That would be enough to tell you that it never really happened at all. More than that, the story is about people who are green all over. Since you do not know people who are green all over, you are again assured that it never really happened.

Understand now, these people did not simply have green eyes. Their skin was green and their hair was green and the green even seemed to rub off on their clothing.

For a long time the Green People resided in a quiet little town called. . . .

*(The moderator is interrupted by the Pastor, who speaks with a touch of annoyance.)*

**Pastor:** You said you wouldn't mention the name of our town.

**Moderator:** But shouldn't they know?

**Pastor:** Of course not. Just say it's an average town with average folk. The Green People just happened to live there with the rest of us . . . that's all.

**Moderator:** Other places didn't have Green People?

**Pastor:** I don't know if they had them or not. If they did, they couldn't have done more than we did. Why you have to make us an example before all these people is something that I can't understand. . . .



**Moderator:** Not an example, exactly. Just trying to tell the story.

**Pastor:** What story? Nothing to it . . . other than a classic example of the ingratitude of the human race.

**Editor:** I should say . . . after all we'd done to create understanding.  
(*moderator sits*)

**Pastor:** He's the editor of our local paper, and he can tell you a thing or two.

**Editor:** Yes . . . Why, I can remember headline after headline in my paper where we gave them every advantage. Wrote some of them myself. There was one . . . "GREEN GIRL WINS NURSING SCHOLARSHIP" . . . and another was "KIWANIS ACCEPTS GREEN LAWYER AS MEMBER."

**Moderator:** That was good?

**Editor:** Sure . . . it was news . . . and it showed that we were really in back of them in their struggle to get ahead. Of course, we had to tell the truth sometimes too. . . .

**Moderator:** The truth?

**Editor:** Well, you know . . . those people always have been pretty wild.

**Chairlady:** I should say!

**Editor:** (*To chairlady*) Mary, are you going to get in this too?

**Moderator:** (*To audience*) This happens to be the chairlady of the Women's Club.

**Chairlady:** (*Big smile*) That's right, and I used to tell the girls at the club that you couldn't judge people by their skin. They might have been green, but underneath they were human just like the rest of us. Still I can remember some of them that you couldn't trust further than you could throw them. My maid was just like that. I caught her snitching at my silver one day, and believe me, I sent her packing in a hurry.

**Pastor:** Mary, tell the people what the Women's Club did for them.

**Chairlady:** (*To audience*) Well, we passed a resolution, for one thing, saying that we thought we should be able to live with one another. Then we said that we were willing to take them into our membership.

**Editor:** That's right . . . I made a big story out of that one.

**Moderator:** (*To chairlady*) Did any of them apply?

**Chairlady:** (*To moderator*) Of course not. You wouldn't expect any of them to be interested in the finer things, really. Oh, there was one lady who came to a meeting, but she didn't come back. We never did find out her name. . . .

**Pastor:** You know, pretty much the same thing happened in the church. . . .

**Moderator:** The church?

**Pastor:** Yes. You know, when the Green People first came to our town, nobody would have anything to do with them. . . .

**Moderator:** And. . . .

**Pastor:** We educated! That was all that was needed really. *Education!* It took a long time. I had to work slowly, of course, but I started a few study groups, and every year I preached a sermon on brotherhood, and gradually we changed.

**Editor:** Lot of good it did! "

**Pastor:** Now Harry . . . we were *sincere* in what we wanted to do, even if *they* weren't! Why, we had a sign put out on the lawn, bronze, cost us over two hundred dollars, "THIS CHURCH IS FOR ALL PEOPLE." The thing of it was that *they* just weren't up to us and *our* way of doing things. You know . . . they still liked that weird Green music of their's, and I just don't think they were able to appreciate our fine heritage. They were always looking for the right place in the book; and they never could develop a taste for the kind of dignity and the better music that we have in our services. . . .

**Moderator:** Better music?

**Pastor:** Certainly! No trash for us. Music has to be able to stand the test of time before we'll use it, and I have a hunch that a lot of those Green People just weren't ready for it. A few of them kept coming . . . the better ones, naturally . . . but most most of them seemed to prefer to stay in their own Green churches. About the only place where we held on to any of them at all was in the Sunday School.

**S.S. Teacher:** Oh Pastor . . . they were sweet . . .

Pastor: (*To moderator*) She's one of our Sunday School teachers. Ask her about the Green People.

Moderator: (*To S. S. Teacher*) Well, Miss?

S.S. Teacher: Oh, I'm not sure that what I have to say really matters. I do know that I never had a bit of trouble in my class . . . those Green children were just so adorable. Why, many's the time I'd say to my students that Jesus would love them if they were white or green . . . and so they shouldn't mind if God made them Green.

Moderator: They shouldn't *mind*?

S.S. Teacher: No! *They* couldn't help it . . . poor little things.

Pastor: There, you see . . . *we* had the right attitude even if they didn't.

Factory Owner: I should say we did, and I just can't understand why they've acted the way they have, after all we've done for them.

Moderator: (*To audience*) This man owns the largest factory in town. He has on numerous occasions declared that he will hire anybody regardless of race or color or creed . . .

Factory Owner: (*To audience*) And that applied to the Green People too. I'll admit that I was just as reluctant at first as any of the others. It takes a while to get used to the idea of Green ones working for you. But I changed my notions . . . and you know, it was kind of dramatic the way it happened.

Pastor: Yes, tell them that story . . . the same way you told it to us back at the church.

Factory Owner: Not much of a story, really . . . but anyway . . . This was back when the Green People first came to town, and I had vowed that I'd never have any of these Green People working for me . . . not while there were any red-blooded white Christians around. Well, the pastor started in saying how we ought to be loving these Green People, but I never paid him much mind. Then one night I was in my car, and it was a pretty dark night at that, and about two miles from any service station my left front tire springs a leak and I've got a flat. Well, I got out to look at it and as I'm bending over the wheel up comes this Green one . . . green as a maple tree in spring and muscles like a horse. For a minute I panicked. Generally, you know, I carry a gun in the glove compartment of the car, but here I was outside the car and I couldn't very well get in. I didn't know if he was going to choke me or rob me or what.

Moderator: And . . . ?

Factory Owner: And he didn't do neither. He just set down beside me and started taking the bolts off the wheel and before I knew it he had that tire changed. My, I thought to myself, that's awfully white of him.

Moderator: White of him?

Factory Owner: Yeah . . . you know . . . *decent*, and all that. Well, the upshot of the whole thing was that I says to him, Do you have a job? and he says No . . . and I hired him on the spot. He made one of the best truck loaders we ever had.

Moderator: And you hired more after him?

Factory Owner: Oh yes. Those Green boys were wonderful for lugging things around and loading up cartons. Not too bright, you know . . . and if you didn't watch them they'd be loafing all the time. But I gave them all the opportunities in the world, and I just can't understand why they've done this to us . . .

Moderator: Well maybe it . . .

Social Scientist: (*Loudly interrupts and speaks to Pastor*) I thought you told me that you wanted me to make a speech!!

Pastor: Now, George, not exactly. It's just that we thought if you'd . . .

Social Scientist: I've been listening to all these people spout off, and if you think that I can just sit around and listen to a lot of stuff from people who don't know what they're talking about, well you have another think coming. I tell you, Pastor, I don't . . .

Pastor: All right, all right. (*To moderator*) Look, George is our social scientist. He's got a Ph.D. in the field, and he knows this whole Green problem inside and out. He can tell you that it wasn't our fault.

Moderator: Why, we'd be glad to . . .



**Factory Owner:** Do we have to listen to him again with all those high-sounding words? Doesn't mean a thing anyway. It all boils down to the kind of practical common sense I used.

**Pastor:** Of course, of course. But you've *got* to have education. That's what we've got a social scientist for . . . so we can get *educated*. Isn't that right, Harry?

**Editor:** Humph. Fat lot of educating *he* ever did!

**Social Scientist:** I don't know that I have to stand for that sort of thing. I thought I was an invited guest, and you've done nothing but insult me. (*makes motions to leave*) I've got better ways to spend my time.

**Pastor:** Now, now, George, just sit back there and don't pay them any mind. They don't really matter now anyway. (*motions to audience*) Tell these people out there all about the Green People. They're the ones who ought to know. Maybe they'll have a green problem themselves someday, and they ought to know how to lick it the way we did.

**Social Scientist:** Very well then, I'll go on. (*adjusts glasses, clears throat, refers conspicuously to his notes*) The first thing that must be understood regarding this matter of the people commonly referred to as the Green People is that this unusual and irregular pigmentation is actually the only distinguishing feature between them and the members of other races. This may come as a surprise to some of you, but extensive research has demonstrated this to be true. Beyond that there is no appreciable difference in regards to such matters as cranial capacity, native intelligence, cultural adaptability, and the like.

On the other hand, it must be recognized that there are factors which must be taken into account when attempting to deal realistically with some of the problems which their presence seems to create. There are certain observable phenomena related to culture, all of which have distinctive hereditary and even environmental origins, which cause what those of us who are schooled in the social sciences like to refer to as intercultural clash. By the most conservative of estimates it must be admitted that these Green People, according to these standards, are to be adjudged generations if not longer in *back* of the rest of the forward march of our culture. Such a condition should elicit from us sympathy and understanding, a willingness, certainly, to adjust to the situations which they must present to us, and a forceful intention to work, side-by-side and shoulder-to-shoulder, for that which is going to eventually make these Green People into first-class citizens. (*In very emphatic tones*) My friends, what it means most of all is that we must learn to live with one another . . . white or Green . . . in peace and harmony. Thank you.

(*Pastor, chairlady, Sunday school teacher applaud. Editor and factory owner scowl.*)

**Pastor:** George, let me thank you for saying what you did. It is true that we've all heard it before, but I think we needed to hear it again. Now they (*motions to audience*) know how we really feel about the Green People. (*To Moderator*) You know, before he moved, this social scientist of ours was a real leader in the fight to see to it that these Green People got everything that was coming to them.

**Moderator:** You *moved*?

**Social Scientist:** Oh yes . . . the whole neighborhood turned Green. You wouldn't expect me to stay, would you?

**Moderator:** No, I guess not . . .

**Chairlady:** I had to move too. It was simply awful . . . wasn't safe to be out on the streets at night . . .

**Factory Owner:** You know, some of them were even dickering to buy the Robinson place on the hill.

**Editor:** No!

**Factory Owner:** That's right. Of course, you can't keep them out once they come, but that's how far it was going.

**Editor:** Well, I'll tell you this. No one knows how close we came to having a Green mayor! Now people can vote anyway they please, and we saw to it that they had every right. But the thing was getting out of hand. In another few years they'd have had us licked. As it was, there were two of them elected to the city council at the last election.

Pastor: Oh but Harry . . . they turned out to be pretty good councilmen. Why, you'd hardly know they were green, the way they acted.

Editor: You're right . . . they surprised even me. But can you imagine what it would be like to have a green mayor?

Moderator: What would it be like?

Editor: Oh, you'd have Green People all through the administration . . . sitting in back of desks looking real important. All the *Christians* would be out in the cold . . .

Moderator: Weren't any of the Green People Christians?

Pastor: Now *I'd* like to say a word on that. Of course they were! You'd hardly expect it of them, but some of them were fine upstanding citizens. We even had a Green sexton at the church for a while. Did a good job, too, and our people liked him. In fact, if there's one thing good about the Green People, it's that they're religious. Sure, they get a little emotional about it at times, but you've got to expect that.

S.S. Teacher: You should have seen the lovely doilies with the Bible verses that I had the Green children make, and once when we were dressing dolls in Biblical costumes, I went out and bought the *green* dolls just for them. They were so pleased!

Moderator: They *were*?

S.S. Teacher: Of course!

Chairlady: Well, I should think they *would* be. In fact, I think that all of us just bent over backwards to make them accepted. They may not have joined the Women's Club, but they could have . . . and I do know that whenever we had a committee for the PTA we always made sure that one Green woman was on it, just so they'd know that they had representation. I still can't understand why they did what they did . . .

Pastor: None of us can. It was one of the most distressing things in my entire ministry. Why, I had even joined the N double A G.P. (*NAAGP*)

Editor: As for that, I told you at the time not to get *so* involved.

Pastor: George here thought that it would be a good thing.

Social Scientist: Of course. A man who wants to be a leader in his community must actively associate himself with these organizations concerned for the equal rights of all people.

Factory Owner: Here we go again!

Social Scientist: Now you know as well as I do that the Association was working for the good of the Green People, and it actually was accomplishing things. Why, you even had your name on the letterhead a few times, though I never did see you at a meeting.

Factory Owner: I'm a busy man! Can't go to all those blame meetings.

Editor: The Association was another thing my paper pushed for them, though. They got a big spread any time they wanted it, and every year, when I wrote my editorial on race relations, I'd mention the National Association at least two or three times.

Moderator: You had an editorial each year?

Editor: Yeah . . . for Brotherhood Week. Say, I brought one along from last year. (*Reaches into inside coat pocket*) Would you like to hear it?

Moderator: Oh, I'm not sure that . . .

Editor: Just a sentence or two anyway. Hmmm . . . let's see . . . uh . . . "We must make all people neighbors. The Green People have a right to all the privileges of the human race. Let us strive for the day when they shall have achieved the high mark that is enjoyed by all of our society." (*Looks up from reading*) Pretty good, uh?

Moderator: May I see that a minute?

Editor: Sure, help yourself. (*Editor hands clipping over to Moderator, who reads with evident interest the reverse side*) Hey, you've got the wrong side.

Moderator: I know, but it's interesting too. It says "Three men were arrested last night on charges of armed robbery. They included Samuel Ulrich, 34, John Tedesco, 30, and Oliver Johnson, a *Green* aged 31."

Editor: What's so interesting about that?

Moderator: Oh, I guess there's nothing to it.



**Factory Owner:** The interesting thing is that all *three* weren't Green People. Everyone knows that they caused ninety per cent of the crime in our town.

**Social Scientist:** That may be true, but it's only a matter of education. Give them time and that will all be adjusted. It's their environment, you see. That's the thing that has to change.

**Moderator:** Weren't they changing their environment when they moved into your neighborhood?

**Factory Owner:** (*To Social Scientist*) You and your fancy speeches. But *you* wouldn't live with 'em, would you?

**Social Scientist:** Speak for yourself, friend! Who were the first to be fired when you had a cut-back at your plant?

**Factory Owner:** That wasn't my fault. They had the lowest seniority, that's all!

**Editor:** (*sarcastically*) Which wasn't your fault!

**Chairlady:** Of course it wasn't. I don't see why we have to blame each other for these things.

**Pastor:** You're right. I think this whole thing has gone far enough as it is, and it's ridiculous for us to be shouting at one another.

**Chairlady:** Especially since we all worked so hard to get them equal rights.

**S.S. Teacher.** (*in a weepy voice*) And to think that they were so ungrateful!

**Editor:** That's what burns me up.

**Factory Owner:** Me too.

**Chairlady:** I don't know what more they could have wanted. They had everything . . . went to school right along with our own children . . . worked where they pleased, lived anywhere they wanted to live.

**Pastor:** It got to the place where the Green didn't make any difference at all. We went out of our way to help them . . . and look what they did to us.

**Moderator:** Pastor . . . what is it that they did? What happened?

**Pastor:** Oh, *everyone* knows. Those people out there (*motions to audience*) . . . they know, don't they?

**Moderator:** Maybe they do, maybe they don't . . . Better tell them what the Green People did anyway.

**Pastor:** (*very quietly*) Well, they *left*.

**Editor:** (*angrily and loudly*) They *left*! The Green People *left*. You hear that out there? They *left*.

**Moderator:** All of them?

**Factory Owner:** Packed their baggage, sold their homes, and they left.

**Moderator:** But I don't understand. What's so terrible about that?

**Social Scientist:** After all we'd done for them? To leave?

**Moderator:** But you didn't really want them in the first place, did you?

**Pastor:** I suppose we didn't.

**Moderator:** And even after you'd gone to the trouble of accepting them, you still weren't happy with them, were you?

**Pastor:** No . . . no . . . we weren't.

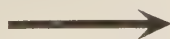
**Moderator:** Then why be upset over their leaving?

**Pastor:** (Slowly and deliberately) I don't know. None of us know. They're gone now . . . and we don't have to worry about how to deal with them anymore, but it seems as if we've *failed* somewhere . . . and we don't know where it is.

(*There is a pause . . . and then the Moderator rises and addresses the audience*)

**Moderator:** You must know that this whole thing has been fiction. There are no Green People, and nothing like this has ever happened before, nor is it likely to happen in the future.

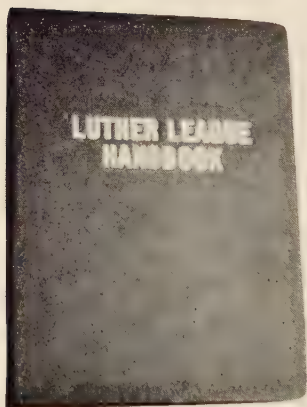
But what of these people who worked so hard to gain equality for others who were different? Do you know what's wrong with them? Do you know where they have failed?



## PRESENTATION POINTERS

This is a good parents' night presentation. There should be no props other than those mentioned at the beginning. Follow the directions for character casting **carefully**. The types of people represented here are real. (Who the Green People are, of course, will depend on your own community's problems.) Questions will arise from the dialogue and the answers to the final question posed by the moderator will come out in the discussion period after the presentation. What is the difference between "integration" and "amalgamation?" Which do you think these people wanted for the Greens? (look up definitions in a good, big dictionary.) An example of a well-amalgamated minority group in this country is the Jews. (They don't have to have the Supreme Court tell them where they can go to school, where they can vote, etc.) But are the Jews **integrated**? (Think about housing, private organizational membership, jobs). Do Christians have any right to think about the social results of carry out Christ's will? What problems does your community have with minority groups?

---



## Spring Cleaning Time!

Shoo the cobwebs out of your league's program with the **LL Handbook!** Its bright new modern cover is right in step with the up-to-date ideas inside. Everything you'll need to give your league a fresh Spring Start!

\$2.50 from LLA

2900 Queen Lane, Phila. 29, Penna.

# PARENTS AND PATIENCE

When associating with parents of teen-agers one hears varied remarks which reveal their patience. When a child fails to fulfill his responsibilities the parent wonders if he "will ever grow up". Sometimes parents endure the almost sullen silence of their teen-age children, unless something happens to displease them, then there is a torrent of unkind words. Teasing is common when there are younger brothers and sisters, and there are the never-ending discussions about when the teen-ager may go out, where he may go, when he must return, what clothes to wear, etc. Christian young people have a responsibility to help make their homes happy, and each one should endeavor to honor Christ by his conduct and relationships at home.

Here are some thumb-nail sketches of teen-agers whose actions call forth the patience of parents.

## *Lack of Cooperation*

Mike never can finish his homework in time to go to bed when the family goes. He is always studying when they say their good nights, and he is always



by Helen J. Shafer



sleeping when they get up in the morning. His mother calls and calls. Finally there is a faint moan from his bed. With persistent patience his mother continues to prod him until he gets up. Dressing is slow, but breakfast and leaving are hasty. Do what she may, his mother can expect this to be a daily occurrence.

In the evening Mike's parents want to have family worship at the table after the meal. Frequently he has somewhere to go or something to do, and when he is present the family feels that he tolerates this period instead of benefiting by worship together.

Dave has real musical ability and likes to play the piano, especially the popular numbers when his friends are around. But the tune is different when it is time to practice. He keeps putting it off as long as possible, fools away some of the time, and quits early, if he can get away with it. For him practicing is irksome. His teacher reports that his lesson is seldom prepared. The parents are puzzled about what to do. They want him to have opportunity to develop his musical talent, but as things are it is wearing on their patience and pocketbook.

### *Striving for Independence*

Look at Nancy. She is at the stage where she rejects the advice of her parents one day and acts on her own decisions, but the next day she may be leaning hard on her parents for guidance. Even though they understand why this is happening it is hard to endure because they never can foretell what her attitude will be.

Her family notices, too, that she seldom shares with them any word about her activities unless she is questioned, and then she reluctantly gives a few details. She can spend hours on the telephone talking to Phyllis about clothes, boy friends, games, etc. Often she keeps the phone busy when other members of the family need it. When interrupted she says, "Yes, I'll be through in a minute." Five minutes later she is still talking!

Bill's assigned chore around home is mowing the lawn. Even when Dad and

Mother plead with him to do it, he puts it off. Usually it is Dad who does the mowing. Mr. Jenkins, who lives down the street, needs help and offers to hire Bill. He is delighted to get a job, and Mr. Jenkins is pleased with his work and spirit. His parents cannot fail to see what is happening. They wonder if they should put Bill's work at home on a pay basis. That might be a way to get the work done. But his excuse is that he is too tired to do the work at home!

His mother's long-suffering almost breaks when he teases his two younger sisters. He has plenty of energy and know-how for that. He pulls open any bows they are wearing, trips them, pulls their hair, etc. Their shrieks for help usually come when mother is busy, and a reprimand to Bill is good for only a few minutes.

### *Withdrawal from Family Life*

Mr. and Mrs. Small know that their son Jack is running around with undesirable companions. He betrays the company he keeps by his actions. He never brings his friends to his home, never tells the family who he is going out with, where he is going, or what he did. He comes home all hours of the night. Most of the time he is out of money, wants to drive the family car, and never thinks of making any return or expressing thanks for all he receives. He has a second-hand car which Dad bought for him because their home is some distance from town. When he is at home he spends a lot of time tinkering on his car, but he can drive it very little because he generally has no money for gas or repairs.

The pastor noticed that Jill was not in church with her family. He inquired about her. With embarrassment Mrs. Bailey said she stayed home. The truth is, she was out until the Sunday morning hours and is using the worship hour to sleep in. She has to get up early most mornings, but with her Christian training, how dare she neglect worship in God's house? Mrs. Bailey wonders where she has failed as a mother. She knows Jill needs fellowship with other Christian

in public worship, and she knows that Jill needs it now more than ever. Jill is growing increasingly independent. Mrs. Bailey expects this, but regrets the direction her independence is taking her. If Jill would respond to her family's teaching she could save herself trouble and heartache later.

### *Self-Interest*

Sue goes through the house like a whirlwind and leaves a path that looks as if one had struck it. She's never learned to put things away or to take care of her belongings. One can tell where she's been by the trail of books, coats, sweaters, boots, shoes, jewelry, etc. The dress and shoes she bought a month ago look like they've seen six months of hard wear. Mother washes and irons and mends and presses. Spills, tears and wrinkles are Sue's fashion. She doesn't *mean* to be thoughtless or careless. She is always in a hurry and never seems to think of her family's patience and endurance and love.

Linda is in love, or at least she thinks she is. She spends hours day dreaming, when she is not *with* Max, and looks upon her present home as a makeshift

until she can have her own house. She builds castles in the air, dreaming of her home with the best architecture, the most modern furniture, and the latest gadgets. Both she and Max are still in high school. He and his parents had agreed that he would study law. But how can he manage a marriage, college and law school, and a home of his own? He and Linda have decided to ask their parents to put him through college and law school and support the family. Maybe Linda can find some employment to help a little. They can wait for their own home until after he begins his practice, and they hope their parents will help finance it while he is getting started in his profession. The young people feel that marriage cannot wait. They think parents owe their children support under such circumstances. The parents of both think the marriage should be postponed. It is possible Max will meet someone in college with whom he will fall in love. As the parents bear patiently with this situation, hoping for a sensible solution, they feel strongly that being in love does not justify being unreasonable.

## PRESENTATION POINTERS

### PLANNING THE MEETING

The purpose of this topic is to help you become aware of the patience which your parents exercise, and to help you try to appreciate and understand them. Each one through the discussion of this subject should become aware of things you do at home without realizing the demand you make for patience. This subject should be helpful because in the not-too-distant future many of you will be parents! The better your relationships are now with your parents the easier it will be for you to become good parents. Tensions grow because we do not try to understand each other.

The basic material given here is to prod your thinking. Each League has within its membership different problems. Try to discover what they are and by all means use them. But be tactful and do not mention names or involve personalities.

A good way to discover your local problems

would be to invite some parents to discuss their experience with your group.

If you have in your League someone who can draw illustrations on posterboard, portraying the problems which teen-agers create for their parents, you could have a "parade" of posters, with interpretations of each one. If you do not make posters, use four or more young people to present the stories under the four headings. Emphasize the need of trying to see the viewpoint of parents in every case.

After the stories are presented the group might divide into four or more parts to discuss some or all of the following questions:

How could Mike's parents solve their problems?

Why do many teen-agers dislike practicing on the piano?

How can you account for Nancy's behaviour?

Why can't Bill work at home as well as he works for Mr. Jenkins?

Why do teen-agers rebel against parental authority?

Why does Jill count other activities more important than church?

Suggest ways to help young people become unselfish.

Why are young people who are in love often unreasonable?

If you have a large league, separate into buzz groups for discussion. Appoint a person in each group who is capable of keeping the discussion moving. Also, each group should choose a secretary to record the main points which have been made and report to the entire League when the buzz groups come together. Allow no more than five or seven minutes for discussion in groups.

### PROJECTS

After this meeting it would be well for each Leaguer to choose to interview one of the persons from the groups suggested in the following list:

From persons whom you regard highly learn what their teen-age relationship was with their parents.

Ask school teachers how the homes influence the behaviour of pupils.

Ask parents of teen-agers what problems tax their patience and how they handle the situations which arise.

Ask your pastor, a councilman, Sunday church school teacher, or some other church leaders what your church is doing or plans to do to make the life of families in the congregation more Christian.

(Note: It would be possible to plan your meeting as an interview, if you can secure enough persons who can offer varied situations.)

### RESEARCH

Study the following passage from the Bible to discover the good and bad things about the homes mentioned: Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-46. Judges 11:30-37; Luke 15:11-32; I Samuel 1:9-28; Luke 2:41-52; Acts 16:25-34.

### WORSHIP

Choose one or more of these Scripture passages: Prov. 3:1-4; 4:20-27; Romans 7:14-25; I Tim. 6:6-12.

Select hymns from the Christian Youth Hymnal from these numbers: 89, 254, 256, 284, 304.

Prayer: Our heavenly Father, we are thankful for our homes and for our loved ones. We are glad that when we call you our Father we understand your nature more clearly because of our own relationships in our family.

Forgive us for our bickering and thoughtlessness which separate us from the joyous sense of unity which at times makes us feel so close together.

Cause to grow within us the spirit of self-sacrifice and understanding which will keep before us the needs of others in our family and in our community.

May we find in our Church, as in our family, a fellowship united through our common love of Jesus and his way of living. Amen (11)

### FOR FURTHER READING

There are many helpful leaflets and books on this and related subjects. Inquire at your public library or church library about what is available. If you do not find anything locally, here are some suggestions, most of them inexpensive leaflets:

Teen-agers—Their Days and Ways, by Ferguson, published by the National Council of Churches.

Facts of Life and Love by Evelyn Duvall. A paperback book for 35c. (ULPH)

The Adolescent in Your Family, a Government publication—Children's Bureau Publication 346, U. S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare. Price—25c.

Keeping Up with Teen-Agers, by Evelyn Duvall. This is Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 127. Price—25c. (ULPH)

Better Ways of Growing Up, by Crawford A. Muhlenberg Press book, cloth, \$3.00.

(1) This prayer is taken from "Youth and Prayer", page 50, and was written by Edward D. Staples. This book was copywriten in 1953 by The Upper Room, 1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 5, Tenn.

**YOU**  
*get 64 pages*  
*in every*  
*issue of*  
**LUTHER LIFE**



# CHRISTIANS CARE!

*... older people must be one of our greatest concerns*

*To help Leaguers understand and sympathize with older people;*

*To lead Leaguers to express their Christian faith in acts of love for older people;*

*To show Leaguers that older people need a continuing sense of God's forgiveness and nearness;*

*To help Leaguers understand the process of growing old.*

ONE-TWELFTH of the American population is over 65 years of age. This means that over 13,000,000 persons in the United States have come to the stage in life where industry and commerce say, "You are too old, and are no longer very useful." We, who are youth, experience the same kind of basic feeling, except that we are told, "You are too young and therefore cannot assume full responsibility." We have an advantage in coping with this feeling, however, in that time is in our favor. We have hope of growing to an age of greater responsibility and opportunity. We have the vigor of youth and a real potential for contributing and succeeding. We can look forward to life, which is unlimited in its possibilities. The older person still can have something to look forward to, but the major part of life is behind. The forward look for the aged comes only in the abiding sense of "belonging."

## MISUNDERSTANDINGS

1. *Older people can expect to be more or less permanently disabled physically.* No! Medical research has shown that many illnesses and disabilities are encouraged and heightened by emotional and dietary upset, and can be helped by

creative activity and adequate diet. It has also been shown that much of that which is termed "senile" is rather a loss of incentive and desire to live. These problems can be helped if someone cares.

2. *Older people can no longer learn.* This, too, is far from true, if they are given a chance and encouragement to continue the learning process. There is no age limit on learning of God and His wonderful world, unless we completely lose the faculty of our mind. We can learn if someone cares.

3. *Unlovely character traits cannot be changed after the age of 65.* The Old Age Counseling Center of San Francisco reports a successful rehabilitation of 80 per cent of the persons they counseled over the last 18 years. They were helped because someone cared.

## WHY SHOULD WE DO ANYTHING?

Our prime motivation as Christians is that we bear the name of Christ, who was interested in people. Christ walked up to the man in trouble and said, "What is your name?" There was something very personal and individual in the ministry of Christ. Christ made people feel they were "someone." This is one of the basic

needs of everyone. We must enlarge our thinking from only numbers to individuals, if we are to be Christians. People who are aged and sick have a hard time feeling they are "someone." This is particularly true when they cannot be active and have people notice them. They are deprived of privacy and possessions. The worth of the individual soul is the object of the Gospel story. In the name of Christ we must live as "someone" and see all others as "someone."

The fellowship of the Church has a mission to perform. Jesus said we are to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world." He said, "You are my witnesses." Salt gives "flavor"; light dispels "darkness." We are to help overcome the darkness of despair and loneliness, and give flavor to the meaningless lives. Luther said we are to be "Little Christs" to people.

We can't be Christians alone. In order to keep our own Christian life, we must share it. Our Christian concern must be for persons of all ages, from the newborn infant to the grandfather and grandmother who is on the threshold of eternity, lest we slip into the habit of thinking only of the needs and problems of our own age group. "He who loses his life for my sake will find it." We cannot keep truth to ourselves. It cannot be "pickled." We must give in order to live. Christ's reflectors brighten with use. Others must know this Christ whom we love and serve. They need the ministry of the Gospel, too.

## WHAT OPPORTUNITY IS THERE FOR ME?

Our sick friends need our Christian concern. They are living in a strange, frightening experience, without real certainty of the outcome. Theirs are generally lonely days. They are separated from loved ones and normal activities. They need to know that they are needed and wanted and missed. You bring the concern of the Church when you come. You bring your Christ with you.

Shut-ins in our congregation need to

be constantly visited to know they are not forgotten. They need to sense that they are still a vital part of the "Communion of Saints." They have much to share of their experience in the fellowship of the Church, which it is good for us to hear and learn, and we have our experience in Christ to share with them. To be forgotten is tragic.

People in rest homes and custodial institutions need us too. Out of sight, out of mind is too often true. Friends and relatives get busy with activities, and visits become less frequent. With each year, the circle of friends of the same age and community becomes smaller. When age comes there is less room at home. These people need to feel loved. They need new interests to keep them alive. They have little or nothing to do. Life can be very discouraging if time is unoccupied. We can bring bright spots in their dreary days.

This means we can be the most important person in someone's life. We can possibly bring a whole new outlook on life to some people. The fact that we care about them enough to come to them means more than words can ever say. The simple fact of our interest in their lives is redemptive. There are many people who have no relatives or friends to visit them in hospitals or rest homes. Someone is waiting for you to become interested in them and share their life.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

1. Pray God for grace to become interested in people as people, and for the willingness to share your life and faith with the ill and lonely.

2. Ask your pastor if there are sick and shut-ins in your community, whom you can go and visit.

3. Organize a group to go with you on regular visits to sick, shut-ins, and convalescents. Ask your pastor how to make the official arrangements.

4. When your group goes visiting plan to have a little prayer with those you visit, if this is agreeable to the individual. Call attention to God's forgiving love in Jesus Christ. This will help

them feel they are still a part of the worshiping Church. Ask the director of the institution you visit whether or not this will be all right and where this might take place.

The worship should include: (a) Some familiar hymns. (Perhaps the persons visited will want to sing with you. You might let them suggest their favorites.) (b) A suitable portion of Scripture. (Read slowly and distinctly.) (c) Prayer. (Your own or a written prayer, and the Lord's Prayer.) (d) A brief meditation. (One that you have prepared or an appropriate one that you have learned to read well.)

5. Be a good listener; many people are looking for someone to tell their story to. Perhaps they may want to tell you of their problems and troubles and you can be of real Christian service by listening to them. Just listening may be the greatest help you can give to them. Be sure to keep their confidences. Report to your pastor all special needs and requests they make so that the right help can be given. Do not promise things which you cannot carry out. You do not come to amuse and entertain. You come as a Christian friend.

6. Good religious literature can help to continue your visit after you are gone. Have your pastor approve it before you bring it to leave with them. Mark the names of your organization and church and its location on it so that they will know that your church is interested in them.

7. Share your experiences with others and encourage them to go with you or to form another group of visitors to go some place else to visit.

8. Have a friendly, positive attitude to the people you visit. They will want to get to know you personally before they will feel free to talk to you. Plan to spend some time with the person or persons you visit. Maybe you will be most effective when you get acquainted with one person real well.

9. Attend any training or discussion groups on understanding people and visiting people that you can learn about.

Read whatever you can to prepare yourself for visitation.

10. Go in the name and Spirit of your Lord. Remember that both you and those you visit are God's creation. Visiting in the name of your Lord can be the happiest experience you will ever have. Don't deprive yourself of this joy.

*Reprinted with permission from YOUTH PROGRAMS, First Quarter, 1956.*

## PRESENTATION

This topic can be presented by reading the prepared material or by asking three or four Leaguers to "role play" older members of your community. By their comments they can use the material of the sections on "Misunderstandings" and "Why Should We Do Anything?" Open discussion can follow on "What Can I Do?"

## WORSHIP

Matthew 25:31-46; Prayer thought: Lord help me bear the burdens of others as You continually have borne the burden of my sins.

## RESOURCES

Maves and Cedarleaf, **Older People and the Church** (Abingdon Cokesbury, New York, 1949).

Baird, Janet, **These Harvest Years** (Doubleday and Co., Garden City, New York, 1951).

Social Security Administration Pamphlets.

Public Affairs Pamphlets.

**And You Came to See Me** (A Visitor's Handbook, Illinois Conference, Lutheran Social Service, Chicago, 1956).

**Ye Visited Me** (20c); **The Congregation and the Older Adult** (10c); **Reservoir of Talent** (5c) are all available from the Board of Social Missions, 231 Madison Avenue, N. Y. 16, N. Y.



# DON'T STUNT YOUR GROWTH!



by Larry Nelson

## Dear Luther Leaguer:

As children become young people and young people become adults, a lot of changes take place. Maybe you've already noticed that there are boy people and girl people in this world of ours; that as these two kinds of people grow up certain physical changes take place; and that people of the opposite sex look pretty interesting to you. Doctors have pinned a most unromantic name on this process: "Physical maturation."

There was a time when you were only able to think about things you could see. But now, (even though your math teacher sometimes disagrees) you are able to put together various independent ideas into a new and bigger thought. Educators call this new power of yours the ability to think in "intellectual abstractions."

Not too many years ago, you would have clobbered your little brother with the nearest ballbat if you caught him "lifting" something from your room. Now if you catch him in the pilfering act you stifle your urge to do away with the beast and find some other method to make it plain to him that you can somehow get along without him. Psychologists call this new adult way of handling problems, "emotional stability."

But the chances are pretty good that one part of you isn't maturing as fast as the rest of you. I remember that it came as quite a shock to me, at the ripe old age of 22, a man physically, emotionally, and intellectually, to discover that I was still a little kid in the junior department of the Sunday school when it came to the development of my faith-life. I don't think I am the only person who ever suffered from stunted spiritual growth. Maybe you do too, and don't even know it.

The law says that you have to go to school, and your teachers are forever giving you tests to see how much development is taking place within that head of yours. Nature takes care of your bodily growth, and the mirror is a pretty devastating report of progress. The old school of hard knocks wears off your rough edges until you have your emotions pretty well under control. And I imagine your folks evaluate your behaviour and dole out privileges accordingly. But how do you find out how you're doing in the department of spiritual growth? The final exam here is about as final as you can get, and we can do without that one for a while. So until then how do you know?

The S.G.Q. (Spiritual Growth Quotient) Test which follows is to give you some clue. If you discover some deficiencies along the line I hope you will have courage and foresight enough to do something about them.

Hoping that you will have fun with this experiment in finding your "S.G.Q.," and wishing that I could be with you to see the results, I am:

Sincerely yours,  
L. Nelson

### Instructions:

### SPIRITUAL GROWTH QUOTIENT TEST

1. Read the stories printed below.
2. After reading each story, answer the questions which follow before going on to the next story. (The story can be read or role played before the entire League. Two procedures for conducting the test as a League topic are possible. In each case either read or role play the story before the group. Then: (1) Have each leaguer answer the questions for himself. The questions can be written on a chalk board and answered by the leaguers in writing on paper provided for the purpose, or mimeograph the test in advance leaving sufficient space for writing in the answers. Distribute the test to each leaguer present. (2) The questions can be asked by the discussion leader and then answered in general group discussion. In larger leagues this could be done through buzz groups. No matter which procedure is used, a discussion should follow the use of each story leading to answers decided upon by group action.)
3. After all the answers have been made for each story, turn to the "scoring" section for that story. Re-study your answers on the basis of the statement of faith referring to each story and complete the discussion before moving to the next story.

### STORY ONE

An airliner with 47 persons aboard was reported missing. After 36 hours of fruitless searching, a helicopter crew noted a blackened spot on a mountain-side. A ground rescue team was dispatched and guided to the location. They discovered the charred wreckage of the plane and 46 bodies. There was one survivor. As the plane crashed, he had miraculously been thrown clear before the explosion and fire. He was found where he had fallen, still strapped to his seat, with both legs broken, unable to move. He was suffering from shock, loss of blood and exposure. After being air-lifted to a hospital, doctors ascertained that he would recover. Later his wife was interviewed by newspaper reporters. She concluded the interview by remarking: "I knew God would take care of him."

### QUESTIONS

1. Does the wife's expression of trust in God reflect a mature Christian faith? Explain your answer.
2. If the man had been killed, would it mean that God had failed to protect him? Explain.
3. How does God protect his children?
4. How is God active in his world today?
5. Did God fail to protect the other 46 people in the airliner?

### STORY TWO

An event which occurred just prior to her fifth birthday is the first vivid memory which Margie has of her father. Although the family was poor, her

mother had managed to save several dollars which she intended to spend for a gift, a cake and other niceties for a birthday party. Her father discovered the hiding place of the money, and even though its intended purpose was explained by her mother, he took the money and left. He came home later that night, very drunk. This was but one of many similar experiences which took place during her childhood. Several years later her mother died, and she was raised by an aunt. Today, Margie is married and has children of her own. Her father is remarried and leads a reasonably respectable life. Margie, however, refuses to speak to her father, and will not let him see his grandchildren.

### QUESTIONS

1. Is Margie's present attitude about her father justified? Explain.
2. Has Margie broken any of the Ten Commandments? If so which one (or ones) Explain.
3. What should Margie's attitude be toward her father? Why?
4. Is there ever justification for hating?
5. How does hating hurt the one who hates?

### STORY THREE

Meet Jim James. Jim is 5 feet eight and one-half, is 16 years old, weighs 137 pounds. He has sandy flat topped hair, blue eyes and an engaging smile. He is too light for football and too short for basketball, so he has gone out for the swimming team. During the summers and on Saturdays he works as a carry-out boy for a super market. He has one brother (younger) and one sister (older). His father is a salesman. His mother is noted for her cooking. Jim was confirmed in the Lutheran church, doesn't bother going to Sunday school, (that's for kids) but is regular in attendance at the church services and at Luther League. He says the Lord's prayer every night when he first gets into bed, and has a brief silent prayer each morning. The James family take turns in saying grace before meals. Occasionally Mr. James will read the Bible to the family after dinner. Twice Jim has cheated on tests in school (he doesn't know that we know), and once he "forgot" to pay for a record at the record shop. (He doesn't know that we know that either). He has no real enemies, is shy with girls, and is liked by his teachers. He wants to be an electrical engineer, and finds science and math his best subjects in school.

### QUESTIONS

1. Do we know enough about Jim to say for certain that he is a Christian?
2. Make a case to support the position that he **is** a Christian.
3. Make a case to support the position that he **is not** a Christian.
4. Can you tell whether someone is Christian or not?
5. What are the things that reveal whether one is Christian or not?

### STORY FOUR

(The following conversation took place in the back seat of a car between John and Kathy on the way home from a date. Strange conversation for a date you say? It really happened though!)

Kathy: I've been bothered all week about pastor's sermon Sunday. Do you remember what it was all about?

John: Not particularly.



Kathy: Sure you do, it was about the importance of our relationship with Christ.

John: Oh yeah, that's right. I remember his poem about some guy who climbed up into the church to be nearer God, only to find out that God was down on the ground all the time. Yak, Yak, what a square.

Kathy: Oh John be serious. What do you think about Jesus.

John: Oh, I don't know, I've never really given it much thought. I guess God sent him to the earth to tell people about God and show them how to live. What do you think?

Kathy: Oh I guess so, but then why does our church put so much importance on our relationship with him today, . . . and how can we be sure he is near us . . . and . . .

John: (John rather rudely interrupted Kathy's train of thought with a kiss, and even though the rest of the conversation is of interest, it wandered rather abruptly from the original topic so we'll stop at this point.)

### QUESTIONS

1. Were Kathy and John being irreverent in their discussion of Christ? Explain your answer.

2. Did they have the right idea, or were they on the right track in their understanding of Christ?

3. Describe the chief characteristics of God and indicate how Christ reveals to us in their fullness these characteristics.

4. What should be the motivating force for our lives, for all that we do?

5. How do we become so motivated?

6. What is sinfulness?

### SCORING

Obviously it is impossible to evaluate objectively the degree of anyone's faith since no one can see into the heart of a person but God. The way to "score" your S.G.Q. is to read the statements below which refer to each of the stories, and re-evaluate your answers using the statements as thought starters. The underlined capsule sentence at the end of the statement for each story summarizes, and gives an indication of a maturing Christian approach to the problem illustrated in the story.

#### *Story One*

Romans 8:31-39 "What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything

else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

*God's care extends far beyond providing necessities and pleasures in this life: it is essentially the proffer of himself in fellowship, a fellowship which begins now but which extends beyond death.*

### Story Two

An excerpt from Luther's explanation of the *fifth* commandment taken from the *Large Catechism*:

In the second place, this commandment is violated not only when a person actually does evil, but also when he fails to do good to his neighbor, or, though he has the opportunity, fails to prevent, protect, and save him from suffering bodily harm or injury. If you send a person away naked when you could clothe him, you have let him freeze to death. If you see anyone suffer hunger and do not feed him, you have let him starve. Likewise, if you see anyone condemned to death or in similar peril and do not save him although you know ways and means to do so, you have killed him. It will do you no good to plead that you did not contribute to his death by word or deed, for you have withheld your love from him and robbed him of the service by which his life might have been saved.

Therefore God rightly calls all persons murderers who do not offer counsel and aid to men in need and in peril of body and life. He will pass a most terrible sentence upon them in the day of judgment, as Christ himself declares. He will say: "I was hungry and thirsty and you gave me no food or drink, I was a stranger, and you did not welcome me, I was naked and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison, and you did not visit me."

*To simply fulfill the letter of the law may actually lead to a worse transgression than that which the law forbade: self righteousness. In Christ we are also bound by the spirit of the law.*

### Story Three

I John 4:7-5:3 "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man has ever seen God; if we love one another; God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we know and believe the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. In this is love perfected with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because he first loved us. If any one says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and every one who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments."

*A person, confronted by the reality of what God has done for him seeks eagerly to love and serve God, and discovers that he loves and serves God by loving and serving his fellowmen.*

### Story Four

Luther's explanation of the Second Article of the Creed, taken from the Small Catechism.

"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, delivered me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with silver and gold but with his holy and precious blood and with his innocent sufferings and death, in order that I may be his, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as he is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true."

*Until one has the sense of being helpless and unable to save himself, he will not comprehend the meaning of a saviour.*

### Dear Leaguer:

Did you have fun with the test? You no doubt observed that the stories led to exploration of four major areas of our faith-relationship with God. The airliner story had to do with how God acts in his world today, and what it means to be under his protecting care. The story of Margie who hated her father had to do with our understanding of the law, and the new interpretation of the law made by Christ. The story about teen-ager Jim James had to do with one's basic relationship with God and the observable indications of this new life in Christ. And the date story was about the meaning of Christ and the Christian understanding of his central position in our faith-life.

Could it be that you have discovered that your growth in faith needs a little bolstering to keep pace with your growth in general? In a way I hope so. For one never really "arrives" in his faith. It is a constant struggle, a life-long process of maturing. I hope no one is satisfied with his child-like concepts about God. Mature concepts are disturbing; they demand work, sacrifice and even suffering. But since they form the only answer to the reason for this life of ours, they are the only truly significant and lasting things in existence. You can never earn them, and it is questionable if you can ever *learn* them. Faith is a gift from God to you. *But you must be ready to receive it!* Let's take a look at some of the things you can do to be ready for an increasing measure of faith each day. Be sure and decide right now what you're going to do.

1. Read the Bible. It tells what God has done for you.
2. Learn to pray and get in some practice.
3. Study. This may even mean sticking to your Sunday school class.
4. Worship. Make the church services "unmovable number one" on your calendar.



5. Participate in the fellowship of Christians. Luther League is a good start.
6. Practice acting out of love. Putting others first is more thrilling than you imagine.

There it is, perhaps too neatly spelled out. But it's the biggest job you'll ever have. From now on it's up to you . . . and God. ■



## What Happens at Communion?

by Donald Knudson

The purpose of this topic is to describe what happens at Communion as Lutherans understand it on the basis of the biblical witness and the contemporary experience and within the context of The Service.

\* \* \*

Every Sunday morning Christians assemble in their churches to worship God. For Lutherans, The Service usually lasts about an hour. It begins with a confession of sins and includes hymns, lessons from the Bible, a sermon, an offering, and prayer. On certain Sundays, The Service is extended to include Communion. And whenever this happens, a num-

ber of changes and additions are made to The Service. For example, a different confession is used at the beginning. The Nicene Creed is substituted for the Apostles'. The sermon may be a little shorter than usual, it may be a meditation. Extra verses and responses are added to The Service at the end together with more singing. And, most important of course, all the members of the church who are confirmed or instructed in the faith go to the altar in order to receive bread and wine.

These differences in The Service are perfectly obvious to anyone who attends church with regularity. Some Sundays it's

just The Service. Other Sundays it's The Service with Communion. But though the difference in the outer form is rather obvious, the meaning behind the form is not so obvious. Just what's going on? What's the point of the extras every so often? What happens at Communion?

The question is a natural one. It pops up frequently. That's why Luther wrote his Small Catechism. That's why instruction classes are held in most of our churches today. That's why the Pastor welcomes your visits to his office before Communion. Like most questions about the Christian faith, this question on Communion is not a simple one to answer. Some people might say that there really is no answer. For, they say, a great mystery surrounds Communion. And to this we would all agree. But in his wisdom, God has given us enough knowledge to make an answer possible. Though we will never completely know what happens at Communion, we must seek to understand it on the basis of the Bible and our experience of it today, if it is to have any meaning for us.

### What is our Faith?

Before working out an answer, however, we've got to pause and review in our minds just what the Christian faith is all about. And this means beginning with God and his purpose for the world. As Christians we believe that God creates man for a life of fulness and joy. He gives us the world with all of its wonders for our own good and in order to make a complete life possible. God intends that we should trust him as our Creator and Father and, trusting him, love his other children as our own brothers.

This *would* be a life of fulness and joy. But each one of us knows that we don't trust God. And because we don't trust God we find it impossible to love our brothers as our own selves. In fact, that's just the problem. We love ourselves so much that we hardly have any love left for anybody else—whether he be younger brother, school mate, or

God himself. We want to be in the center of the stage all the time. And because we are so self-centered, we don't know our heavenly Father for what he is. Our vision is blurred and our lives are incomplete. It's as though we all put on dark glasses and then wondered why it looked so gray outside.

Our biggest problem, however, is not that we've got on dark glasses. It isn't that we don't know God for what he is. No, instead our problem is that *by ourselves we can't get to know God at all, even when we try*. It's as though our hands are tied and we couldn't get the dark glasses off, even if we wanted to. Our only hope is that *God* understands our problem. So in order to give us a more perfect knowledge of himself, he became one of us!

The rest of the story is familiar to everyone—from the manger to the cross to the empty tomb. And when Christ returned to the Father, his disciples had a clearer idea of what God was like than anybody had ever had in the history of men. They knew that God was love. They knew that they had been created to trust God. They knew that even when they couldn't trust him as they wished, God's Spirit was near to fill their hearts with trust. And so they went about telling others the good news about God in Jesus Christ. The disciples knew that they were no longer outside God's love. They realized that they were on the *inside*, and they wanted others inside with them. You can imagine what a difference this must have made in their relations with other people. No more worries about themselves! Their only purpose was to let *other* people know about God.

Now a lot of people get confused by the calendar at this point. They think that because Jesus once lived from day to day and walked about on crowded city streets that therefore he can't be with us now. And yet this is exactly the reason Jesus left his disciples! He didn't want to be with just a small number of people at a particular time in history in the form

of a man. Instead, he wanted to be with all people through *all* time. And he has promised us that wherever someone is talking about him and spreading the good news of his life, *he* is there, even though he can't be seen.

## How do we know God?

This brings us to a very important matter. We know from experience that God never comes to us directly. He always comes to us through an earthly form or means. For example, when God wanted to demonstrate his love for us, he came as a man. Jesus was truly a man, yet we believe that God was truly present in him. Thus God used the earthly medium of a human being to show himself to us. We believe that today God comes to us by means of words that tell us about him or bring his love to us. For example, every Sunday morning when your Pastor says "*Almighty God, our heavenly Father, hath had mercy upon us, and hath given his only Son to die for us, and for his sake forgiveth us all our sins. To them that believe on his Name, he giveth power to become the sons of God, and bestoweth upon them his Holy Spirit. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Grant this, O Lord, unto us all.*" we believe that God is present in those words, coming to us, forgiving us for our lack of trust, and filling us with his love. God is no longer present with us in the earthly form of a man, visible to the eye. Instead, he is present with us in the earthly form of words, audible to the ear and meaningful to the heart. In this way he persuades us of his love and forgives our sin and fills us with faith.

Words are the primary medium by which God in Christ meets us. This is because God has made us creatures who communicate chiefly by means of words. Each one of us expresses himself in a variety of ways. A turn of the lips, a twinkle in the eye, a furrow on the brow, a blush on the cheeks—they all mean something. And they serve to convey our feelings to others. (Don't many of us take pride in the skill with which we

can read facial expressions?) But often these expressions, when not accompanied by words of interpretation are misunderstood, confusing, or incomplete. So we try to make clear with words of explanation—and other people understand us. This is why words are so important as a medium of God's presence now. Words arouse our minds, they bring understanding to our hearts, they demand a response in our lives.

Thus, words are important to us as God's children. And words are the means by which God comes to us. They can be the words of the Bible at family or private devotions. They can be the words of a sermon at church. They can be the words of a friend who forgives you for the lie you told about him. God is present for us in these words where we recognize his love and respond in trust. He speaks. We hear. We respond. The process can never be automatic. In fact, it can't be called a "process." It is a relationship between two people. It is always one person—God—addressing another person—you and me—with a message that makes a change in our lives. Even when God was a man in Jesus Christ it was his words, received in faith by the disciples, that made his life meaningful. If it hadn't been for the words he uttered, his life would have been without meaning.

But though words are the chief means by which God comes to us with his love, they are not the only means. He comes to make us his children when we are baptized, by water connected with words. He comes to nourish us as his children, when we receive the bread and wine, connected with the words, at the altar. In these sacraments he meets us by means of water, bread, and wine. In these sacraments we come to know his love for us. But notice, *the visible element is always accompanied by words.* The words not only make clear what is happening, they actually cause it to happen. Apart from the words there is no action—only heads that are a little wet and stomachs that contain some bread and wine. But with the words uttered and received in faith, water means



rebirth and bread and wine mean strength. This is not because the audible words are more special than the visible elements. *God is active in words and elements. Both* are forms God uses to make known his love. But the words are primary and essential, because through them God speaks to us as persons. Through them his loving action is meaningful for us. This is the way God has made us. This is the way he deals with us.

## The First Question

And now back to our initial question—what happens at Communion? Think of The Service itself. First there is a public confession. We admit that things aren't quite right between us and God and each other. We don't trust him as our Father the way we should, and because we don't, all kinds of problems develop—both in action and in idea. But matters are so complex that we can't even fully understand the network of difficulties that surround us. And so we open up completely before God because we know that he knows us better than we know ourselves. Then we receive his forgiveness in faith.

Our public confession is nothing more than an admission that we need help. And every Sunday God's answer comes to us in the words of the Bible, the sermon, and the hymns. Then, on days when there is Communion, God's answer comes to us in another way, in the bread and wine connected with the words. We kneel and receive the elements. "The Body of Christ, given for thee." "The Blood of Christ, shed for thee." What happens? God's answer to our need is never just a reply. It is an act by which he makes things right again. God turns us toward him in faith, love, and trust. Once more we are the believing children of a gracious Father.

The words say "This is my body," "This is my blood," and that's exactly what they mean. Remember, just as Jesus came in the form of a man, and as he comes in the form of words, so he comes in the form of bread and wine. He never meets us directly. He is always

present in a medium. But he *is* present. The bread is bread. The wine is wine. There is no miraculous change. There is no mysterious "half and half." In his own way, God is present as the living and glorified Christ. This is bread and it is at the same time his body. This is wine and it is at the same time his blood. We receive him in faith and joy.

What then happens at Communion? *Christ is present with us and in us.* We share in the first Supper which occurred so many years ago. We anticipate the final Supper in the Kingdom which is to come, when Christ will be present, not as our Saviour hidden in earthly forms but as our Lord known in his heavenly glory. At Communion we are joined to him and we are joined through him to our brother. It strengthens our faith toward him and our love toward one another. At Communion God's salvation affects our whole person. As we receive Christ's body into our body, every bit of us is changed in relation to our Father. The whole man is forgiven and made new again. Communion, then, is all of the good news of God's love for man concentrated in a single experience of action through words and elements. It is life and salvation for us.

## Who Is Worthy?

Now that an answer to our first question has been worked out, other questions are bound to follow. Sometimes Christians are troubled by the question of whether or not they're *worthy* to receive the Sacrament. *The only people who aren't worthy of the Sacrament are those who don't admit their need, or who show by the way they live that they don't really seek God's forgiveness.* To be worthy is to recognize your unworthiness—to confess that only God can change you! That's what we do at public confession.

And what about that absence of feeling at the Communion table? Is it a bad thing if a person doesn't feel any different after receiving the elements? Not really. The important thing is not how we feel, but how *God* feels toward us—

and whether or not we believe what he says! We look outside to him, not within to ourselves. It is just because we don't feel as we should that we're there in the first place. We know his feeling because he gives himself to us and we believe him—that's the important thing!

There are other questions; and perhaps other answers. But after all the questions have been asked and all the answers have been given, God's ways with men are still past finding out. He gives himself to us. We know him. And yet we don't know him. He comes in words and elements. And yet they remain words and elements. We experience his forgiveness. And this is the glory of God. He is God! He bends low that we might know him. And yet he is beyond us. Praise be to him!

## PRESENTATION POINTERS

1. The biblical bases for Holy Communion are Mark 14:22-25, Matthew 26:26-29, Luke 22:15-20, and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Study the passages. What do they tell us of our Lord's intent in instituting the Supper? How is this reflected in our current practice?

2. The fourth gospel doesn't record the institution of the Lord's Supper. Most scholars believe that chapter 6 represents Jesus' teaching on the matter, however. In what ways does this passage, especially verses 35-39, add to our understanding of Communion?

3. On the basis of Luther's explanation of the Sacrament of the Altar in the Small Catechism, discuss what he felt to be most important in Holy Communion.

4. Read through the Order for Public Confession and the Communion in the Service Book. On the basis of this topic, what significance could be attributed to the various parts?

5. Read through the Communion prayers (page 234 f) and the Com-

munion hymns (#262-286) in the Service Book to discover the devotional meaning of the Sacrament.

6. Three people might be selected to present different phases of the topic. The first person might explain how the Communion expresses the fullness of the Gospel. The second might present a summary of various problems which Intermediates have in understanding Communion (from slips of paper distributed earlier, for the purpose of discussion). The third might do the same with practical problems (i.e., how to receive the wafer, nervousness at the altar, etc.) with suggestions for preparation and meditation before and after.

7. How is Communion an expression of God's personality? Does his personality become part of us when we receive his body and blood? How do we express it in our lives?

## LOOK

What's in the April

## LUTHER LIFE

\* \* \*

The Work of Recreation

THE BARRIER

DYNAMOS!-PARTNERS

in the church

ODD ONE: Short story

Immanuel: Word study

Seed time Devotions

Events, Books, Movies

More!

\* \* \*

Do You Subscribe??

# COMMERCIALISM IN LUTHER LEAGUE

by Bob Beckstrom



"You mean we can't have car washes anymore? And what's wrong with an ice cream social? Boy, we can't have any fun anymore. And how are we going to raise money?" These are typical reactions of some young people to the Luther League of America's new "Guiding Statement on Commercialism", adopted by the 1959 LLA Convention which met at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

Why did the Luther League adopt such a statement? What does this mean for our league? These are questions every leaguer has a right to ask. More than that, he *ought* to ask them.

The "Guiding Statement on Commercialism" is the result of your requests. You asked for it! Young people had been asking the Luther League of America for guidance in raising money for the Luther League. LLA conducted a thorough study on Christian stewardship for young people. The "Guiding Statement on Commercialism" is one of the results. *You asked for it!*

Delegates to the 1959 LLA Convention engaged in a hot word battle over the statement. There were impassioned speeches in favor of it. There were sharp attacks against it. Above all, leaguers wanted it explained. "Just what does it say?" was the question of many. So that all delegates could know "just what it says" before voting for or against its adoption, a special evening business session was called to explain and discuss the statement. (All delegates voluntarily gave up their usual late-evening activities in order to attend this session). When everyone had been given a chance to speak his mind or ask his question, the vote was taken—a substantial majority in favor of adopting the statement.

The adoption of this "Guiding Statement" is a venture in faith. It shows a marked growth in the stewardship understanding of Lutheran young people.



It shows that young people are convinced they don't need to depend on commercial methods of raising money to support their program in the church. They are "sold" on the plan of supporting the Luther League by Scriptural methods of giving—tithes, offerings, and proportionate giving.

Christian stewardship begins with love—Christ's love—and our love in response. The way a Christian responds is a reflection of his love for Christ. That's why the *manner* in which a Christian gives his money is so important. His manner of *giving* reflects his manner of *loving*.

The Luther League feels its responsibility to teach this understanding of Christian stewardship to its members. Therefore, the "Guiding Statement on Commercialism". It is important to note that this is a *guiding* statement. Its purpose is to *guide* leaguers, not to tell them how they *must* run their leagues. Each individual leaguer, each individual league, is *free to decide for itself* how it wishes to raise money to support the Luther League program.

But the "guiding statement" is not to be taken lightly. Every effort has been made to ground the statement firmly on scripture. It judges each person, each league, as they are judged by their consciences according to the testimony of the gospel.

To be sure, the statement will call into question certain practices which have become accepted as a genuine part of the life of a Luther League. But popularity, or tradition, or common acceptance cannot be accepted as the basis for what is right in Christian stewardship. Only the gospel provides such a basis.

Now, let's place the guiding statement under the microscope and look closely at each part of it.

**Christian Stewardship is the practice of a life dedicated to God through Jesus Christ. Recognizing the total claim which Christ has over his life, the Christian yields all that he has and is for service in God's kingdom. Included in this response is the use of his time, ability, and money for the proclamation of the Gospel. A primary enemy warring against his total response and threatening the practice of Christian Stewardship is commercialism within the church.**

When an orchestra is playing it is important that every instrument be in tune with the entire orchestra. When one instrument is out of tune, the rest of the orchestra is discredited. If the one who is out of tune cannot be brought up to pitch, he must leave the orchestra.

Commercialism is out of tune with Christian stewardship. It is a "sour note" in the orchestra of total response to Christ's love. Many have tried to harmonize commercialism and Christian stewardship, but they cannot be harmonized. Therefore, the Luther League has decided that commercialism should be eliminated from its program.

Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Saviour, lays claim to our lives—every aspect of our being. The practice of our Christian lives—stewardship—arises from our commitment to Jesus Christ as we respond to His love for us. Because we as Christians recognize all that we have comes from God, we in turn desire to yield all in service to God. This response must be directed solely to the proclamation of the Gospel. When, however, anything conceals or deflects our understanding and/or practice of our Christian lives (stewardship) we must seek to set this aright in light of God's Word.

Just what is meant by the term "commercialism"?

**Commercialism in the congregation or in its auxiliaries occurs when in the name of the church and of our Lord**

**there is buying and selling of products or services through such events as fairs, bazaars, games of chance, car washes, sales and like enterprises.**

Commercialism is the buying and selling of products or services resulting in equal or greater value exchange. Although the activity is proper in itself, it can become dangerous in the life of the Church. Whenever any project is publicized in or by the Luther League, then this project is done in the name of the Church and of our Lord. The Luther League must be careful that all projects exemplify the true purpose of the Church.

The Luther League is an auxiliary of the Church. Whenever the name "Luther League" is attached to an activity, the activity becomes a reflection, either good or bad, upon the Church of Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that all the activities of the Luther League be in complete harmony with the Church's purpose of proclaiming the gospel.

Fairs, bazaars, sales, and the like are legitimate commercial enterprises. In return for a certain amount of money the customer receives a product or a service. This is a proper method of operation for the business world. But it is out of place in the Church—and in the Luther League, because it reflects on the Church.

**Festivals, suppers, babysitting services, theatrical productions and similar activities are open to serious question when their purpose is raising money for the church.**

Few people would question the place of such activities in the life of the Church. They provide wholesome opportunities for Christian joy, service and fellowship. But when their purpose is to raise money, they fall into the category of "commercialism". A good way to decide whether a certain activity is proper for the Luther League or not, is to ask the five questions listed at the end of the statement on commercialism.

**The results of commercialism in the congregation are detrimental to the church, the community, and the personal lives of all who participate. Several reasons are:**

**1. Commercialism suggests a false purpose for the church, that it is a business enterprise. The purpose of the church is to proclaim the gospel.**

When a Luther League conducts a car wash, for example, its main concern is "how much money can we make." In this respect it is no different than the service station on the corner. But it is the purpose of a service station to wash cars and make money. The purpose of the Church is to proclaim Christ. Can a car wash proclaim Christ? Some will answer, "It proclaims Christ by using the money for the program of the Church." But the end does not justify the means. The "means" in this case is a commercial venture, and commercial ventures suggest to people that the Church is a business like other businesses, instead of "the spiritual body of Christ" whose purpose is to proclaim Christ.

Throughout the centuries the true purpose of the Church has been to tell the good news of Christ. This is the only purpose that justifies the Church's existence. At different times in history this purpose has been overshadowed by other activities. Commercialism, as such, conceals the true purpose of the Church.

**2. Commercialism exploits the name of Christ and his church by causing members, as well as others, to feel an obligation to support such projects because a church organization endorses them.**

Have you ever purchased a box of all-occasion cards you didn't want or attended a sauerkraut dinner in spite of the fact that you hate sauerkraut, simply because you felt you would be disloyal to your church if you didn't? People often attend Church suppers or buy articles sold by the church simply out of loyalty to the Church. Is it right for the Church to exploit people's loyalty to Christ by enticing them to buy products which they can obtain commercially? Is it right to ask them to buy products which often they do not even want? To do so is to impose upon an individual's personal loyalty to his Lord.

Lutherans in a certain midwestern city were urged to buy tickets for "Lutheran Night" at the baseball park. Proceeds were to go to an institution supported by Lutherans in the area. People were enraged when they found that less than twenty percent of the money received for tickets went to the announced cause. The rest had been spent for promotion, rental of the park, etc. Many persons bought tickets with no intention of attending the ball game. They were simply giving their loyal support to the institution benefiting from the sale of tickets. How much happier these people would have been, and how much more the institution would have benefited, had all the money been given as outright donations! And the appeal for outright donations in the name of Christ and His Church would have been an honest and honorable appeal.

It certainly is not the conscious object of the Luther League to exploit the name of Christ through any of its activities; however, this often happens when we provide opportunities for trading in the Church. Members of the Church feel that they should patronize the activity to fulfill their responsibilities as Christians. This activity becomes a substitute for the proper response of a Christian, faith active in love.

People who are not members of the Church also will support such an activity in order to preserve the Church as an organization which promotes order and provides stability in the community. In both cases we are twisting the intended purpose of the Church by connecting its name to our enterprise.

### **3. Commercialism obscures the leaguer's sense of personal responsibility in his stewardship of money by transferring this personal responsibility to activities of the group.**

Our relation to God is essentially personal, but because we live in the spiritual community of the Church it is never private. Group activities are helpful as long as they provide an opportunity for the individual to grow in his personal relationship to our Lord. But commercialism does not respect or encourage the personal aspect of stewardship. Commercialism tends to develop in persons the "I-Helped-at-the-bake-sale-today-therefore-I-have-done-my-part" attitude. Someone else says, "I helped with every one of the church suppers, therefore I don't feel that I have to pledge to the building fund." When funds are raised through group endeavor the individual is not challenged to venture in his giving under the tension of personal decision.

Doing one's part in some group project does not substitute for giving a portion of one's own income to support God's work through the church. St. Paul advises that "*each of you* is to put something aside . . . as he may prosper." (I Cor. 16:2) Giving is a *personal* responsibility. Participation in group activities is done *in addition to*, not *instead of*, a personal commitment to offer God a portion of one's income.

### **4. Commercialism adds to a person's selfishness. He may**



**fail to consider what God has done for him; and he may think he is doing something for God.**

Commercialism encourages in people a "see-what-I-did" attitude. "I helped with the bazaar, the ice cream social, and the bake sale. That's more than Sally can say for herself. If it weren't for all the work I do around here the league wouldn't have any money." That attitude often results when commercialism is practiced.

Of course, a person may take such an attitude toward anything he does in the Church. To do so is also selfish. But the very fact that commercialism, by its profit-making nature, encourages persons to publicize the results of their own efforts, is good reason to call it into question and to discontinue its practice. Christian stewardship keeps the focus on God and what he has done, not on what the individual does for God.

It is very easy for a person to become so involved in a project that he forgets that the Lord has given him the talents he is using. He thinks that in using these talents he is producing something that will please God. God does not have need of anything we do, but desires all that we are and have. Thus the proper attitude is to be humble in the presence of God's great gifts to us instead of proud in the glory of our own small achievements.

**5. Commercialism tricks people into the satisfaction of thinking they are giving to Christ and his church when they are receiving a product or service in exchange for their money.**

"Look at this nice baseball mitt I got at the church rummage sale. I bought it for only a dollar. I'm really in favor of these rummage sales. I give a dollar to the church and I get a good mitt. You can't beat a deal like that."

No, you can't beat a *deal* like that, but you can sure beat *giving* like that. When a person gets a piece of merchandise in return for money given to the Church, he hasn't really "given" at all. Yet people sometimes have the mistaken idea that purchasing something from the Church is the same as offering their money at the altar as an act of worship. But any time a person gets a product (such as a meal or a box of cards) or a service (such as an hour of baby-sitting) in return for his gift to the Church, he has simply made a commercial transaction. He has not offered anything to God. He has merely traded one object (a dollar bill) for another (some product or service).

Giving for the Christian must be likened unto the activity of God as expressed in the free gift of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As such we give freely without any thought of return, out of our deepest experience of love. Commercialism often leads people to think that they are giving to the Church when they have merely made a financial transaction in which they have benefited materially. It is true that a congregation may experience a financial gain as a result of such enterprises, but we must recognize that the Church is concerned only with the lives of the people involved and not in the material blessings which it may enjoy.

**6. Commercialism reflects lack of trust in God, in that those who resort to its practices are afraid that worthy projects will fail if supported solely by free-will giving.**

To depend solely upon free-will gifts to support the work of the Church requires a deep trust in God's ability to touch the hearts of people.

The president of the Women's Group of a certain congregation was heard to remark, "We can't give up raising money through suppers and sales. Our

women won't give enough in offerings to support our program." Either that woman lacked confidence in God's ability to move the hearts of her women, or her organizational budget was too ambitious.

Free-will giving is the only method of giving taught in the New Testament. It is motivated by love for God. It is based on a personal commitment by the individual Christian, not on a law which says "you must give so much". It is personal and private and thrives on humility, in contrast to commercialism which thrives on competition and recognition.

Free-will giving means that a person gives out of his own treasure because he wants to give. It may take the form of a written pledge to support the work of the Church or it may not. But above everything else, it considers what God has done for us. The free-will gift is given in humble response to God's love.

Free-will giving is a more dependable means of supporting the work of the Church—if one is willing to view the matter through the bifocals of faith. In your congregation make an appeal for donations to help send youth to camp or to a convention. Just see if the response won't overwhelm you. People who trust in God have confidence that others who trust in God won't forsake the support of His work.

How we use our money is a symbol of our love and devotion to Christ as well as an indication of our understanding of our Christian responsibility. Personal giving through free-will offerings reflects such an understanding and is a testimony to the reality of our faith.

**Whenever a project is too large to be financed by free-will giving, it is a questionable project for a league because its good purpose is outweighed by wrong fund-raising methods.**

In a contest of good sportsmanship, the manner in which a team wins a game is as important as the victory. The same is true of Christian stewardship. The means of raising money for a project is as important as the project.

Giving is a means of Christian growth as well as a result of it. When wrong fund-raising methods are employed in the interest of a certain project, Christian growth is stunted. The means of financing a project in the Church is as important as the project.

**In the consideration of any project, these questions should be asked:**

**1. Will this Project obviously be an act of service in God's name?**

When we serve in Christ's name, it is as if Christ Himself were accomplishing the act. This should be done in such a way that those we serve will most certainly recognize this fact and give praise and thanks to God.

**2. Will this project result in spiritual growth for the leaguer's involved?**

Spiritual growth in itself can never be measured, but we can be assured that it will most likely occur when a project provides an experience in which leaguers can really be confronted by the living Christ.

**3. Can this project be financed by leaguers' personal giving through free-will offerings?**

Scripture suggests only one approved method of giving, sacrificial giving. When we feel that we must resort to other methods we deny God's power to fulfill the needs of His Church in this appointed way.

#### **4. Will this project enable leaguers to use creatively and imaginatively their talents and abilities as given them by God?**

Christ's total claim upon our lives requires a total response. In like manner service projects should help to develop every area of our lives, not simply require of us to give our money.

#### **5. Will this project honor Christ and aid in the proclamation of His message?**

Everything we do should point to Christ and away from ourselves. By so doing we will most effectively glorify His name and aid in the proclamation of the Gospel. Our service should prepare the soil in which the seed of the Word is to be sown.

We cannot judge perfectly whether any given activity of the Luther League fulfills all five of these requirements. However, asking these questions of any activity or project to be undertaken will certainly remind us of the primary purpose of the Church and of the Luther League. And it is hoped that in being so reminded we will be moved to reject any project that smacks of commercialism.

### **PRESENTATION POINTERS**

This problem could be presented by a narrator with several persons helping to act out the illustrations given. For example, it could begin with one person saying sharply, "You mean we can't have car washes anymore? etc." The narrator could then read the introductory material. The "hot word battle" waged by convention delegates could be acted out by having two persons throwing "words" (written on cards) at each other. A little ingenuity will lead the topic presenters in devising ways of acting out the other illustrations explaining each part of the statement.

Following presentation of the topic, discussion could center around past activities or future activities of the group. Each activity or project could be examined and discussed in light of the five questions at the end of the statement. For example, how would an ice cream social be judged in light of the five questions? Is there any way in which an ice cream social could be conducted that would prevent it from being guilty of commercialism?

Follow-through could be made by writing the five questions on a large poster and posting them in the league meeting room to remind leaguers that proposed projects

should be considered in light of these questions.

This article is now available in pamphlet form for 15 cents from LLA, 2900 Queen Lane, Phila. 29, Pa.

#### **WORSHIP OUTLINE**

HYMN: Son of God, Eternal Saviour, SBH 542.

PSALM: Read responsively Psalm 24.

GLORIA PATRI

SCRIPTURE: 2 Cor. 8:1-9

OFFERING

DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER

HYMN: Lord Speak to Me, SBH 538

TOPIC

HYMN: We Give Thee But Thine Own, SBH 544.

PRAYER: O God, who in thine infinite love hast entrusted to us both the knowledge of thy truth and the gifts of thy bounty: help us to use them as good stewards, giving liberally, praying constantly, and working diligently, that we may share in bringing all men to thy truth and in hastening the coming of thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.





# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

by Elizabeth Hess

## SIGNBOARDS

"Go to the Church of your choice this Sunday."

"Take *your* family to church in a ————station wagon."

"First Lutheran Church two blocks north."

What do these advertisers mean by the term 'church'? In each case they refer to a building; and this is the sense in which *we* frequently use the term. We say our congregation just built a new church, or our church needs painting, or our church is too small for our congregation, or that church was sold to a pentecostal group because the congregation is building a new church in the suburbs. When friends visit us for the first time, we always take them on a tour of 'our church'. Little children in the beginning years of their Sunday Church School experience are taught to love and respect 'the church' by teachers who show them the building, who talk about its

parts and how we act in it and what its name is, who refer to this building as "God's House".

So an understanding of 'the church' as a building to which we go to study God's Word and to worship Him is the first step in formulating a true conception of 'the church'. But is the church really a building? Or is the building merely the *place* in which the church meets to praise and thank God for all His blessings! Unfortunately, many youth and adults have never gotten beyond the kindergarten level of understanding the church as a building.

## HEADLINES

"Church Takes Stand on Integration"

"Church Moves to New Headquarters"

"Merger of 3 Churches Takes Place At History-Making Convention"

What do these newsmen mean by the

term 'church'? Here the reference seems to be a denomination, organization, institution. How often you yourself have said, "I'm a Lutheran" or "We belong to the Lutheran Church" or "Our church says that each person must decide for himself which movies ought not to be watched by a Christian". In each case you are referring primarily to the church as an organization. There are even times when you split hairs and differentiate between ULCA and ELC and Mo. Luth. and all the rest of the 'alphabet soup' of Lutheranism in North America.

As an interesting study, you might make a comparison of the major divisions of the Christian Church as an organization. See how many of the differences within the "one holy Christian and apostolic church" originate in different *interpretations* of the Gospel, and how many simply in *emphases* on different aspects of the same truth. You may be surprised to find how much more unity than diversity there is in Christendom!

So the second step in the growth of understanding of the true church is knowledge of the denomination or organization of the church. We might liken this growing conception of the church to a circle: We meet its circumference first, its building; we move within that circumference and are faced with the area, its organization; now finally we must find the center of the circle, the heart of the meaning of the term 'church'.

## SERMONS

- "The Church welcoming strangers"
- "The Church's concern for social need"
- "The Church faces Communism"
- "The Witness of the Church"

What do these preachers mean by the term 'church'? They obviously refer to persons, for only *persons* can act to welcome or to be concerned or to face anyone or anything; only *persons* can do something! Buildings and organizations are lifeless units which can be acted upon and utilized by persons but which are motionless without the activity of human

individuals. So preachers speak of 'the church' as groups of people who witness to the love of God as revealed in Christ Jesus, people who demonstrate what they believe about Christ Jesus, people who make word and deed one in Christ Jesus.

In the Apostles' Creed we confess the Church as holy, Christian, a "communion of saints". It is holy because the Holy Spirit works in it and through it to "call, gather, enlighten, and sanctify" individuals. It is Christian because only those are members who believe in Jesus Christ as God-the-Son and Savior of all men. And it is a "communion of saints" because those in whom the Holy Spirit is working (saints) have fellowship with one another.

In the Nicene Creed we call the Church one, holy, Christian, apostolic. Here we find two new terms: "one" and "apostolic". The Church is one because it includes every true believer in Christ, regardless of race, nationality, denomination, sect, or any other human differentiation; it is the Body of which Christ is the Heart, the Flock of *the* Shepherd. It is apostolic because its teachings are based upon the witness of the apostles, the Gospel (good news) of God's Love Incarnate (God become man).

In the Augsburg Confession, Melancthon writes:

*The Church is the congregation of the saints, in which the gospel is correctly taught, and the sacraments are properly administered. And for the true unity of the church, it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrines of the gospel, and the administration of the sacraments. Nor is it necessary that the same human traditions, that is, rites and ceremonies instituted by men, should be everywhere observed.*

—Augsburg Confession,  
Article VII

So we see that the preachers' use of the term 'church' usually refers to that "communion of saints" which the believing Christian confesses it to be. So the heart of understanding of the mean-

ing of 'the church' is that it is the community of those who believe in both the divinity and the humanity of Jesus Christ.

## CONVERSATION FRAGMENTS

"My girlfriend goes to my aunt's church."

"How can I marry him when his church says . . ."

"Come with me to our church picnic Saturday!"

"I grew up in that church."

What do these youth mean by the term 'church'? It seems to me that they use it in the sense of its total aura: place, belief, fellowship, denomination—all that we have talked about thus far in this article. The Church is a building in which people who believe a certain way about God come together to praise, thank, and adore Him and to witness to His Love to others. It is inclusive of all who join in such faith and at the same time exclusive of all who do not. It includes sinners who are saints and saints who are sinners. The church is an organization of like-minded believers who band together for more effective witness to non-believers. It has a mission to make it possible for those who have excluded themselves from this fellowship to include themselves. It is the avenue through which the Holy Spirit helps sinners to become saints.

But basic to all this that the church is, is the person of the Christian. The church does not exist except as you and I—and all other individuals who believe in Jesus Christ as God-in-the-flesh come to seek to save all individuals—come together to fulfill our mission, our Call, to be His witnesses.

So I am the Church—I, together with all others who believe. I cannot condemn the church for its shortcomings or veils without condemning myself for those same ones. I cannot isolate myself from the needs of the society in which I live without destroying the church and therefore myself. What *I* do, what *I* say,

what *I* am determines what the non-Christian knows as 'the church'. So I am the church—and the church is I!

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

**Books:** (purchasable from any Lutheran Book Store)

1. The Church at Worship, E. T. Horn III—UB803 60c
2. The Awakened Heart, R. W. Stackel—PUE716 75c
3. Our Protestant Heritage — Weekday School text, grade —PUE1440 \$1.50
4. Christian Growth Series, M3—God's Way Through the Church
5. Symbols and Terms of the Church, F. S. Brown—UB397 20c
6. Luther's Catechism, with Explanation by Joseph Stump
7. Behold the Church, C. Kilmer Myers (Seabury Press).—95c (Church's work in inner-city missions.)

**Articles:** see index issue of LUTHERAN LIFE and High Ideals

**Filmstrips:** (rentable from any religious filmstrip library)

1. The Story of the Christian Church—color, with discussion guide
2. The Office of the Keys—black and white, with guide
3. Sanctification, Part III—black and white, with guide

## METHODS FOR USE OF THIS TOPIC

It is recommended that all members of the group read the article prior to the meeting, regardless of what method is used for presentation.

### Debate

1. Resolved: that we should quit the church.

Your initial speech should include your definition of the church followed by your logical reasons for or against the reso-



lution. In your rebuttal, you must disprove your opponent's reasons in the light of his (not your) definition of the church.

**2. Resolved: that sinners should be excommunicated.**

Your initial speech should include your definition of the church as well as your definition of a sinner. These definitions are the basis of your argument. In your rebuttal, you must logically refute your opponent's definitions.

### Field Trip Series

Visit other Protestant Churches in your community, a sectarian group, a Roman Catholic group, and if possible an Eastern Orthodox group. If possible, try to speak with laymen of these groups. Keep these questions in mind, jotting down answers as you go along so that you will be able to enter into a discussion after all the visits are complete: "What does this group mean by the term 'church'? How does this group 'live out' its definition?" Before your discussion meeting, think through your personal definition of 'the church' to determine which groups visited seem to fit or fail to fit your definition. You are now ready to discuss 'the church' with the others who made the visits with you.

A variation of this might be to assign various members of the group to visit and report on one group each.

### Study of Symbolism

Study some of the more common symbols of the Christian Church (such as the ship, the fish, the keys), learning their origins, their meanings, the variety of their artistic forms, and the like. Tour your own church buildings to find them. Then share your knowledge with some other group. You might prepare a presentation for your department in Sunday school. Or you might make a series

of drawings or mosaic plaques of those symbols you have studied, attach a printed or type-written explanation of each, and display them in the narthex of your church for the entire congregation to see.)

### Discussion

Using one of the filmstrips suggested, you might divide into small groups of three or four after the viewing the filmstrip to work out definitions of the church and how it relates to daily living. The leader would then call for a general discussion of each group's definition. Such small group discussions work out best if there is no adult in the group with the three or four Leaguers. Then leader needs to be prepared to summarize the decisions reached in the general discussion.

**A CAUTION:** The most deadening way to use this topic is to read it to the group. The second most deadening thing to do is to have someone lecture on the subject. Everyone benefits most if real thinking is done by all the Leaguers.

## READ ABOUT YOUR LEAGUE'S ACTIVITIES

in

## LUTHER LIFE lately?

let us hear about  
you in the Events  
Section SOON!

# PROJECT LWR!

Lutheran World Relief is pressing vigorously forward in its program of sending relief supplies to suffering people. More than 300,000 tons of clothing, food, medicine and self-help materials have been shipped to countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America since 1946.

LAYETTES are URGENTLY needed in places like Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Middle East. Gifts through the Church give witness to Christ!

PREPARING LAYETTES is a special project for Lutheran World Relief. You might cooperate with other groups in your congregation in planning and carrying out this project effectively. Remember, this is a special kind of clothing drive, and it is important that you read the directions *CAREFULLY*!

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR LAYETTES

**A full layette should contain the following: NO MORE, NO LESS!**

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 24 diapers (large size)                                  | 2 flannel jackets                   |
| 2 long flannel nightgowns                                | 2 wash cloths                       |
| 2 binder bands   | 1 crib blanket                      |
| 3 long sleeve undershirts                                | 2 receiving blankets                |
| 1 pair long wool booties (with draw string around ankle) | 1 wool sweater                      |
| 1 rubberized crib sheet                                  | 1 wool cap                          |
|  | 2 sleepers with feet or drawstrings |

## HOW TO PACK AND SHIP

Note: Clothing should be large. Size 2 is better than Size 1. These items should be neatly folded in a bundle 15 inches by 25 inches so it will fit into the baling machine in Easton. Height of the bundle does not matter. *Materials can be new, used or mixed.* Wrap in the blankets and fasten with safety pins. Do not include in this package anything such as foods, shoes, safety pins, toys, baby oil or powder. They will be crushed in the baler. There is a great demand for such items but they must be sent separately. REMEMBER these layettes will not be opened. They will be baled in Easton as you send them. Pin paper on each with "FULL LAYETTE—DO NOT OPEN" plainly printed. Wrap and send postage prepaid to the Easton address below.

## SEND LAYETTES TO:

**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF, INC.  
15TH AND ELM STREETS, EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA**

# THE CHRISTIAN IN POLITICS

by Eberhard Amelung

*. . . Christian love takes you into politics  
even before you can vote!*

IN recent years we have had much talk about the crisis of Christianity today. "What is wrong with Christianity?" is a familiar topic in church magazines. Basically, it is a good sign that we ask this question. A Christianity which thinks everything is satisfactory, which rests content with its achievements, is preaching, its activity etc. is a imitation. Only in totalitarian systems is criticism considered a weakness. Living religion is not afraid of questions about every aspect of its doctrines or its activities.

Although there is continuous criticism of the churches today, this does not at all mean that we have enough of the criticism or that we have reached every level of the church. Many self-satisfied congregations are still drowsing along, neither alive nor dead, very friendly and very harmless. People think everything is wonderful in the church. They are happy to rest with a reformation which passed 400 years ago.

Almost everybody who raises the question, "What is wrong with the Church?", gives a different answer. Some think **their** answer is the only possible one. If the one thing which they criticize were changed—so they say—then all evils would be abolished.

I too am concerned with a specific aspect of the church. But I should *not* like to make my demand absolute and to leave out the many other problems in which our churches are involved. My special concern may be called "the political responsibility of the Church and the individual Christian".

This subject has come to the attention of the church in recent years. But this attention has been restricted mainly to the headquarters of the different denominations or of the National Council of Churches. Their committees are working, and in many cases they are doing a very good



job. But our local churches and the individual Christian notice very little of this activity. They know even less about what it means to speak about "political responsibility." And yet, **concern for politics has always been a vital function of the church.**

In the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke we are told that one day Jesus met ten lepers who "stood at a distance, lifted up their voices and said, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us'." Jesus sent them to the priests, and by the time they arrived they were cleansed.

The report continues: "Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks." And he was a Samaritan. Jesus told him that his faith had made him well. For us it is important in this context that it is said, "He praised God with a loud voice." Obviously **everybody** was supposed to hear him. The whole community—the little village in which he was living—should have heard him. In this way his healing became a **political event.**

This may sound strange. Yet it may be made clear by a similar story, reported in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John. There the blind man who was healed by Jesus comes into conflict with the authorities, because he speaks **in public** about what has happened to him. His gratitude leads him to praise, and his praise brings him into trouble with the political authorities. Here it is quite clear that the Christian's gratitude has a **political dimension.**

The close relationship between religion and politics is evident on almost every page of the Bible, because many of its words and concepts were taken from the political realm. The most striking example is the term: the Kingdom of God. A kingdom is a state, and where there is a state there is politics. We read about God's law and God's justice, and then Ten Commandments were taken **not only** in Old Testament times as the basic law of a political unit.

Not only does Christian gratitude have a political dimension but also Christian **love** as well. One of the basic questions of every Christian is: What does it mean that we should love our neighbor as ourselves? It is said and demanded so easily, but even the lawyer who came to Jesus continued to ask him: Who is my neighbor? Even if we have found the neighbor and know who it is at the present time, then still the question remains: What should I do with him? What **kind** of help and how **much** help does he really need?

The answers are as numerous as the number and kind of situations one can imagine. Sometimes these answers are clear at once. The starving man needs food. The drowning man needs someone to pull him to the river bank. Yet, what kind of love does the handicapped require, the sick or the one out of work, the alcoholic or the member of a teenage gang? Is it **enough** to visit or to give food for one day? Is it **enough** to comfort by words or to give money which will help through the next day? Certainly this can mean a lot, and one should never forget that it may be decisive. But, on the other hand, **one should not think that this is all that can be done.**

Christian love means more than to provide relief of temporary evils. Christian love penetrates into and looks for the *causes* of evil and tries to uproot them. We have to concern ourselves with the psychological and sociological background and meaning of evil situations. In our modern society there is never *one* man out of work but *thousands*, there is

never *one* boy or girl a member in a gang but *hundreds*. When there are hundreds or thousands, they are a problem for the state, the concern of the law-makers, the legislators of the community, and of the nation itself. All kinds of programs are considered, proposed, pronounced and set into action. Money is used, taxes are raised and every individual citizen participates actively or passively. If it is done well, it will be real relief and help: If it is poorly managed, it will be a waste of money and means.

But what has all this to do with Christian love? Very much, indeed. If we **really** want to help people we must concern ourselves with these things. Love does not necessarily vanish if it is expressed and channeled through a social or legal agency of a state. **It can still be Christian love which merely has gained its political dimension.** And the political apparatus of a state may be one of the means by which Christian love may find its form and a Christian deed is done.

Now, you may reply: But we are not politicians! This is certainly true. But you can and should realize that **concern for politics belongs as much to our Christian responsibility as giving money to foreign missions or learning the names of the books of the Bible in Sunday-school.** Giving money or learning names might be easier, but it might also be less Christian. Giving money and learning names won't get us into trouble. Our concern for political action might. Love never shrinks from trouble, even if it does not especially look for it. But love will use every means to help our brother. In our modern society **politics** is one of the means.

But still the question remains: What can **you** do when you are not a politician and maybe can't even vote yet? The answer is an easy one. **You can prepare yourself.** You can do this just as you prepare yourself for any other responsible task which you may encounter in your life. Here are a few suggestions how to do it.

1) **A good political judgment**—the presupposition, the necessity for every good political action—**requires knowledge of the facts.** To be sure, nobody can possibly know everything which is involved in a political decision. But some do better than others, and the earlier you start to accumulate knowledge the more you'll have in the end. We gain knowledge of political facts mainly from reading the newspapers—good newspapers. Again, it is impossible to read them all or even one from cover to cover; but it is possible to learn to read the **decisive** important sections. There are weekly magazines which present a summary of the basic political events of the week and which can be bought even in the most remote mid-Western countryside.

2) **Take history seriously.** Our history books tell the story of the political decisions of the past. Certainly we are told about different situations and times. But the basic elements of making political decisions have hardly changed. Therefore we still can learn from history. It will show us the great figures who created and formed a nation. Their ideals and their solutions to certain problems may be similar to ours.

3) **Concern yourself with geography.** Our world has become small. Fifty years ago nobody had to care about what was going on at the other side of the ocean. We cannot afford such a luxury any longer. If Chinese troops cross the Indian border in an area so remote that it takes two weeks to reach even India from there, we will know it the

next day. It is important that we know it, because it may change the balance of power in the whole world.

The United States spends billions of dollars every year for underdeveloped countries. It is true that the average American citizen has not even heard the names of many of them. But we must know our world if our political decisions as **Christians** are to be meaningful and responsible. Or to say it in another way: It is our **brother's** tax-money which is spent.

4) **There are certain things you can do as a group.** Discuss the political problems of your nation, or your state, of your community. At least once every month make certain political topics the theme of your evening meeting. Most of the newspapers carry in their Sunday editions a summary of the political events of the week. These are excellently suited to be read in a group and to be discussed. You may read together novels set in foreign scenes, the memoirs of the great statesmen of our time or such exciting reports as "The Ugly American."

5) **Make local politics a topic of your discussions.** Invite the political leaders of your community to speak and ask them to tell you about their tasks and their aims. Try to understand how they spend tax money. Many of their decisions concern you directly, for instance, everything related to the schools.

6) **Finally, be the gad-flies of your churches.** Watch the older people and see whether they know anything about the political responsibility which is theirs. Many of our churches have forgotten (or never learned) what it means to 'love the brother', to love *every* brother. This commandment has so often turned into a headline which is nice to be heard but without any meaning of obligation. The brother is not an abstract concept; he is not the object of a friendly conversation. He lies before the door of every church. To love him is political responsibility; political responsibility is love. ■

## PRESENTATION AIDS

Some suggestions and ideas for presentation are included in the text of this topic. Make collections of news clipping and magazine news items for your league blackboard during this election year's national campaigns or for your local political events. Make summaries of the main issues which face campaigners this year, local problems in housing, roads, schools; foreign aid, national defense, government aid for school construction, increased social security benefits, civil rights. Recognize your Christian responsibility to your neighbors—specific neighbors—and learn how your group and you individually can carry through this responsibility into action. A good service project on this subject would be ringing doorbells of members of your congregation and of your community as a whole, reminding them to register and to vote. Use your LLA pamphlets on Social Action, Missions and Service Projects to help you plan programs and projects on Christian responsibility in politics.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What effects do our decisions at home in our governments have for the mission of the Church abroad? Can Christians always be democratic and remain Christian? What are some situations where the will of the majority might not be in keeping with Christian teachings?

## PRAYER

O God our King, who hast called us through Jesus Christ to be kings and priests unto thee: Teach us to bear one another's burdens and the burdens of the commonwealth. Open our eyes to see the woes of our land, the despair in the lives of many, and the deep and shameful wrongs that cry to be put right. Give to us also a vision of our land as thou wouldst have it be, and as thou alone canst fashion it. Make us thy servants, giving us no rest or discharge until thou hast wrought this work of compassion that generations yet unborn may praise thy Name. We ask this for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.



# HIGH IDEALS INDEX 1960

## ART

12. Colors with a Purpose ..... Winter 1960 31

## BIBLE

40. After Christmas (Epiphany) ..... Winter 1960 3  
41. The Challenge of Service ..... Winter 1960 14

## CHRISTIAN VOCATION

63. How Do We Witness? ..... Spring 1960 18  
64. The Christian in Politics ..... Spring 1960 59

## CHURCH

15. Climate for Commitment ..... Winter 1960 36  
16. What is the Church? ..... Spring 1960 54

## DATING

12. Dating is Learning ..... Winter 1960 26

## DOCTRINE

22. What Happens At Communion? ..... Spring 1960 42

## EDUCATION

41. School Is For Life ..... Winter 1960 41

## EVANGELISM

16. What is the Church? ..... Spring 1960 54  
14. How Do We Witness ..... Spring 1960 18

## FAMILY

15. Parents and Patience ..... Spring 1960 29

## MISSIONS

28. Missions Around the World ..... Winter 1960 19

## OCCUPATIONS

22. Jobs for you in the Church ..... Spring 1960 14

## PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

15. How Do We Pray? ..... Spring 1960 2

## PERSONAL GROWTH

22. Problems!	Winter 1960	9
23. You in a Tug 'War	Winter 1960	43
24. How Do We Witness?	Spring 1960	18
25. Don't Stunt Your Growth!	Spring 1960	36
26. The Christian in Politics	Spring 1960	59

## PLAYS AND SKITS

50. Time to Spend (Recreation)	Winter 1960	7
51. Climate For Commitment (Church)	Winter 1960	36
52. The Green People (Social Action)	Spring 1960	22

## PROJECT IDEAS

26. Project LWR! (special clothing appeal)	Spring 1960	58
--	-------------	----

## SEASONAL

65. After Christmas (Epiphany)	Winter 1960	3
66. Lent	Winter 1960	46
67. What is Worship? (seven services for Lent or Holy Week)	Spring 1960	7

## SOCIAL ACTION

18. The Green People (a play)	Spring 1960	22
19. Christians Care! (youth and aged)	Spring 1960	33

## STEWARDSHIP

1. League in Business	Winter 1960	33
2. Commercialism in Luther League	Spring 1960	47

## WORSHIP

18. How Effective is Your Worship?	Winter 1960	16
19. What is Worship? (seven services)	Spring 1960	7
20. What Happens At Communion?	Spring 1960	42

**PASTORS!**

**DEADLINE APRIL 15TH!**

**PASTORS!**

### DOES YOUR LEAGUE NEED A LIFT?

IF: Your youth are not active

IF: Your league officers need guidance

IF: Your advisors need helpful hints

IF: You don't have a youth organization

IF: Your present organization is not functioning well . . .

**You can make good use of a CARAVAN TEAM!**

**Write LLA for full outline of Caravan program for ULCA congregations!**

# THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

2900 QUEEN LANE

PHILADELPHIA 29, PENNSYLVANIA

## Executive Secretary

THE REV. LESLIE CONRAD, JR.

## Members-at-Large

TERM 1957-61

DAVID ANGERSBACH, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Marion and Winter Sts., Salem, Ore.; THE REV. DAVID R. GERBERDING, 2310 Stevens Ave. So., Minneapolis 4, Minn.; J. LUTHER MAUNEY, JR., 2817 Longview Ave., S.W., Roanoke, Va.; CHARLES T. PASCOE, JR., Room 211, Firestone Hall, Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio; ROBERT WALTERS, 14925 Penrod, Detroit 23, Mich.; JUDY FORD HOUSER, Highway 274, North, Cherryville, N. C., Immediate Past President.

## Associate Secretaries

THE REV. ARTHUR O. F. BAUER

AL DALY—Youth Associate

## Executive Committee

TERM 1959-63

### Officers

ROBERT MENGES

President

43 W. Broadway, Gettysburg, Pa.

JOHN HOFER, JR.

Vice President

2661 Garland, Cincinnati 9, Ohio

DOROTHY BUERK

Secretary

152 Washington Avenue, Albany 10, N. Y.

ARNOLD TIEMEYER

Treasurer

1644 S. 11th Avenue, Maywood, Ill.

MR. MARION CLARK, Newberry College, Newberry, S. C.; THE REV. PAUL ERICKSON, Room 520, West Adams St., Chicago 3, Ill.; EDDIE RICKS, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia 3, S. C.; JERRY SMITH, Apt. A-3, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa.; HELENE ULRICH, 101 Bottomley Ave., So., Saskatoon, Sask., Can.

### Division Chairmen

MARY LOU MEINDERS, Christian vocation, Carthage College, Carthage, Ill.; FRED REISZ, Evangelism, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.; JUDY McWILLIAMS, Missions, 2 West Ferncliff Place, Springfield, Ohio; CAROL JOHNSON, Social Action, 3429-32nd Avenue South, Minneapolis 6, Minn.; HELENE ULRICH, Recreation, 101 Bottomley Ave., So., Saskatoon, Sask., Can.

## OUR WRITERS

DR. WILLIAM R. SEAMAN (p. 2) is pastor of Emmanuel Church in Souderton, Pa. and teaches at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. JOHN BUERK (p. 7) is assistant pastor at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Albany, N. Y., and he is also the husband of LLA's Secretary Dottie Davis Buerk. DR. VERNON L. STREMPKE (p. 14) is an associate secretary of the ULCA's Board of Higher Education. FRED REISZ (p. 18) is Chairman of LLA's Evangelism Committee. CARL T. UEHLING (p. 22) is a pastor at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Akron, Ohio. MRS. HELEN J. SHAFER (p. 29) is director of Christian education and youth work at Trinity Lutheran Church in Milton, Pa. LARRY NELSON (p. 36) is Secretary of the Department of Youth Work in the Board of Parish Education of the ULCA. DONALD KNUDSON (p. 42) is a senior at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. BOB BECKSTROM (p. 47) is pastor of St. Mark's Church in Sioux City, Iowa. SISTER ELIZABETH HESS (p. 54) is currently studying at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. DR. EBERHARD AMELUNG (p. 59) is a native of Germany who is a teaching fellow in Ethics at Harvard Divinity School.

## OUR ARTIST

All Art Work (except ad on page 13) was submitted by MARIANNE PIFER, sophomore leaguer from Ada, Ohio.



**HERE IT IS!**



## **YOUTH PROGRAMS 1960-61**

**LLA's program resource book  
for 1960-61 (replacing High Ideals)  
see description on inside front cover**

**Single copies: \$1.50 each  
3 or more copies: \$1.25 each  
Order from LLA  
2900 Queen Lane  
Philadelphia 29, Penna.**

*P.S. LUTHER LIFE is NOT going out of business!*